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The Bramleighs of Bishop's Folly.

CHAPTER I.

THE BISHOP'S FOLLY.



OWARDS the close of the last century there was a very remarkable man Bishop of Down in Ireland; a Liberal in politics, in an age when Liberalism lay close on the confines of disloyalty, splendidly hospitable, at a period when hospitality verged on utter recklessness, he carried all his opinions to extremes. He had great taste, which had been cultivated by foreign travel, and having an ample fortune, was able to indulge in many whims and caprices, by which some were led to doubt of his sanity, but others, who judged him better, ascribed them to the self-indulgence of a man out of harmony with his time, and con-

temptuously indifferent to what the world might say of him.

He had passed many years in Italy, and had formed a great attachment to that country. He liked the people and their mode of life; he liked the old cities, so rich in art treasures and so teeming with associations of a picturesque past; and he especially liked their villa architecture, which seemed so essentially suited to a grand and costly style of living. The

great reception-rooms, spacious and lofty; the ample antechambers, made for crowds of attendants; and the stairs wide enough for even equipages to ascend them. No more striking illustration of his capricious turn of mind need be given than the fact that it was his pleasure to build one of these magnificent edifices in an Irish county!—a costly whim, obliging him to bring over from Italy a whole troop of stucco-men and painters, men skilled in fresco-work and carving—an extravagance on which he spent thousands. Nor did he live to witness the completion of his splendid mansion.

After his death the building gradually fell into decay. His heirs, not improbably, little caring for a project which had engulfed so large a share of their fortune, made no efforts to arrest the destroying influences of time and climate, and "Bishop's Folly"—for such was the name given to it by the country-people—soon became a ruin. In some places the roof had fallen in, the doors and windows had all been carried away by the peasants, and in many a cabin or humble shealing in the county around slabs of coloured marble or fragments of costly carving might be met with, over which the skill of a cunning workman had been bestowed for days long. The mansion stood on the side of a mountain which sloped gradually to the sea. The demesne, well-wooded, but with young timber, was beautifully varied in surface, one deep glen running, as it were, from the very base of the house to the beach, and showing glimpses, through the trees, of a bright and rapid river tumbling onward to the sea. Seen in its dilapidation and decay, the aspect of the place was dreary and depressing, and led many to wonder how the bishop could ever have selected such a spot; for it was not only placed in the midst of a wild mountain region, but many miles away from anything that could be called a neighbourhood. But the same haughty defiance he gave the world in other things urged him here to show that he cared little for the judgments which might be passed upon him, or even for the circumstances which would have influenced other men. "When it is my pleasure to receive company, I shall have my house full, no matter where I live," was his haughty speech, and certainly the whole character of his life went to confirm his words.

Some question of disputed title, after the bishop's death, threw the estate into Chancery, and so it remained till, by the operation of the new law touching encumbered property, it became marketable, and was purchased by a rich London banker, who had declared his intention of coming to live upon it.

That any one rich enough to buy such a property, able to restore such a costly house, and maintain a style of living proportionate to its pretensions, could come to reside in the solitude and obscurity of an Irish county seemed all but impossible, and when the matter became assured by the visit of a well-known architect, and afterwards by the arrival of a troop of workmen, the puzzle then became to guess how it chanced that the great head of a rich banking firm, the chairman of this, the director of that, the promoter of Heaven-knows-what scores of industrial schemes for

fortune, should withdraw from the great bustle of life to accept an existence of complete oblivion.

In the little village of Portshandon—which straggled along the beach, and where, with a few exceptions, none but fishermen and their families lived,—this question was hotly debated; an old half-pay lieutenant, who by courtesy was called captain, being at the head of those who first denied the possibility of the Bramleighs coming at all, and when that matter was removed beyond a doubt, next taking his stand on the fact that nothing short of some disaster in fortune, or some aspersion on character, could ever have driven a man out of the great world to finish his days in the exile of Ireland.

"I suppose you'll give in at last, Captain Craufurd," said Mrs. Bayley, the postmistress of Portshandon, as she pointed to a pile of letters and newspapers all addressed to "Castello" and which more than quadrupled the other correspondence of the locality.

"I didn't pretend they were not coming, Mrs. Bayley," said he, in the cracked and cantankerous tone he invariably spoke in. "I simply observed that I'd be thankful for any one telling me why they were coming. That's the puzzle,—why they're coming?"

"I suppose because they like it, and they can afford it," said she, with a toss of her head.

"Like it!" cried he, in derision. "Like it! Look out of the window there beside you, Mrs. Bayley, and say, isn't it a lovely prospect, that beggarly village, and the old rotten boats, keel uppermost, with the dead fish and the oyster-shells, and the torn nets, and the dirty children? Isn't it an elegant sight after Hyde Park and the Queen's palace?"

"I never saw the Queen's palace nor the other place you talk of, but I think there's worse towns to live in than Portshandon."

"And do they think they'll make it better by calling it Castello?" said he, as with a contemptuous gesture he threw from him one of the newspapers with this address. "If they want to think they're in Italy they ought to come down here in November with the Channel fogs sweeping up through the mountains, and the wind beating the rain against the windows. I hope they'll think they're in Naples. Why can't they call the place by the name we all know it by? It was Bishop's Folly when I was a boy, and it will be Bishop's Folly after I'm dead."

"I suppose people can call their house whatever they like? Nobody objects to your calling your place Craufurd's Lea."

"I'd like to see them object to it," cried he, fiercely. "It's Craufurd's Lea in Digge's *Survey of Down*, 1714. It's Craufurd's Lea in the *Anthologia Hibernica*, and it's down, too, in Joyce's *Irish Fisheries*; and we were Craufurds of Craufurd's Lea before one stone of that big barrack up there was laid, and maybe we'll be so after it's a ruin again."

"I hope it's not going to be a ruin any more, Captain Craufurd, all the same," said the postmistress, tartly, for she was not disposed to

undervalue the increased importance the neighbourhood was about to derive from the rich family coming to live in it.

"Well, there's one thing I can tell you, Mrs. Bayley," said he, with his usual grin. "The devil a bit of Ireland they'd ever come to, if they could live in England. Mind my words, and see if they'll not come true. It's either the Bank is in a bad way, or this or that company is going to smash, or it's his wife has run away, or one of the daughters married the footman;—something or other has happened, you'll see, or we would never have the honour of their distinguished company down here."

"It's a bad wind blows nobody good," said Mrs. Bayley. "It's luck for us, anyhow."

"I don't perceive the luck of it either, ma'am," said the captain, with increased peevishness. "Chickens will be eighteenpence a couple, eggs a halfpenny a piece. I'd like to know what you'll pay for a codfish, such as I bought yesterday for fourpence?"

"It's better for them that has to sell them."

"Ay, but I'm talking of them that has to buy them, ma'am, and I'm thinking how a born gentleman with a fixed income is to compete with one of these fellows that gets his gold from California at market price, and makes more out of one morning's robbery on the Stock Exchange, than a Lieut.-General receives after thirty years' service."

A sharp tap at the window-pane interrupted the discussion at this critical moment, and Mrs. Bayley perceived it was Mr. Dorose, Colonel Bramleigh's valet, who had come for the letters for the great house."

"Only these, Mrs. Bayley?" said he, half contemptuously.

"Well, indeed, sir; it's a good-sized bundle after all. There's eleven letters, and about fifteen papers, and two books."

"Send them all on to Brighton, Mrs. Bayley. We shall not come down here till the end of the month. Just give me *The Times*, however; and tearing open the cover, he turned to the City article. "I hope you've nothing in Ecuadors, Mrs. Bayley? they look shaky. I'm 'hit,' too, in my Turks. I see no dividend this half." Here he leaned forward, so as to whisper in her ear, and said, "Whenever you want a snug thing, Mrs. B., you're always safe with Brazilians;" and with this he moved off, leaving the postmistress in a flurry of shame and confusion as to what precise character of transaction his counsel applied.

"Upon my conscience, we're come to a pretty pass!" exclaimed the captain, as, buttoning his coat, he issued forth into the street; nor was his temper much improved by finding the way blocked up by a string of carts and drays, slowly proceeding towards the great house, all loaded with furniture and kitchen utensils, and the other details of a large household. A bystander remarked that four saddle-horses had passed through at daybreak, and one of the grooms had said, "It was nothing to what was coming in a few days."

Two days after this, and quite unexpectedly by all, the village awoke to see a great flag waving from the flagstaff over the chief tower of

Castello ; and the tidings were speedily circulated that the great people had arrived. A few sceptics, determining to decide the point for themselves, set out to go up to the house ; but the lodge gate was closed, and the gatekeeper answered them from behind it, saying that no visitors were to be admitted ; a small incident, in its way, but after all, it is by small incidents that men speculate on the tastes and tempers of a new dynasty.

CHAPTER II.

LADY AUGUSTA'S LETTER.

It will save some time, both to writer and reader, while it will also serve to explain certain particulars about those we are interested in, if I give in this place a letter which was written by Lady Augusta Bramleigh, the Colonel's young wife, to a married sister at Rome. It ran thus :—

"DEAREST DOROTHY,—

"Hanover Square, Nov. 10, 18—.

"HERE we are back in town, at a season, too, when we find ourselves the only people left ; and if I wanted to make a long story of how it happens, there is the material ; but it is precisely what I desire to avoid, and at the risk of being barely intelligible, I will be brief. We have left Earlshepe, and, indeed, Herefordshire, for good. Our campaign there was a social failure, but just such a failure as I predicted it would and must be ; and although, possibly, I might have liked to have been spared some of the mortifications we met with, I am too much pleased with the results to quarrel over the means.

"You are already in possession of what we intended by the purchase of Earlshepe—how we meant to become county magnates, marry our sons and daughters to neighbouring magnates, and live as though we had been rooted to the soil for centuries. I say 'we,' my dear, because I am too good a wife to separate myself from Col. B. in all these projects ; but I am fain to own that as I only saw defeat in the plan, I opposed it from the first. Here, in town, money will do anything ; at least, anything that one has any right to do. There may be a set or a clique to which it will not give admission ; but who wants them, who needs them ?

"There's always a wonderful Van Eyck or a Memling in a Dutch town, to obtain the sight of which you have to petition the authorities, or implore the Stadtholder ; but I never knew any one admit that success repaid the trouble ; and the chances are that you come away from the sight fully convinced that you have seen scores of old pictures exactly like it, and that all that could be said was, it was as brown and as dusky, and as generally disappointing, as its fellows. So it is with these small exclusive societies. It may be a great triumph of ingenuity to pick the lock ; but there's nothing in the coffer to reward it. I repeat, then, with money—and we had money—London was open to us. All the more, too, that for some years back society has taken a speculative turn ; and it is

nothing derogatory to fine people 'to go in,' as it is called, for a good thing, in 'Turks' or 'Brazilians,' in patent fuel, or a new loan to the children of Egypt. To these, and such like, your City man and banker is esteemed a safe pilot; and you would be amused at the amount of attention Col. B. was accustomed to meet with from men who regarded themselves as immeasurably above him, and who, all question of profit apart, would have hesitated at admitting him to their acquaintance.

"I tell you all these very commonplace truths, my dear Dorothy, because they may not, indeed cannot be such truisms to you—you, who live in a grand old city, with noble traditions, and the refinements that come transmitted from centuries of high habits; and I feel, as I write, how puzzled you will often be to follow me. London was, as I have twice said, our home; but for that very reason we could not be content with it. Earlshope, by ill-luck, was for sale, and we bought it. I am afraid to tell you the height of our castle-building; but, as we were all engaged, the work went on briskly, every day adding at least a story to the edifice. We were to start as high-sheriff, then represent the county. I am not quite clear, I think we never settled the point, as to the lord-lieutenancy; but I know the exact way, and the very time, in which we demanded our peerage. How we threatened to sulk, and did sulk; how we actually sat a whole night on the back benches; and how we made our eldest son dance twice with a daughter of the 'Opposition,'—menaces that no intelligent Cabinet or conscientious 'whip' could for a moment misunderstand. And oh! my dear Dora, as I write these things, how forcibly I feel the prudence of that step which once we all were so ready to condemn you for having taken. You were indeed right to marry a foreigner. That an English girl should address herself to the married life of England, the first condition is she should never have left England, not even for that holiday-trip to Paris and Switzerland, which people now do, as once they were wont to 'do Margate.' The whole game of existence is such a scramble with us: we scramble for social rank, for place, for influence, for Court favour, for patronage; and all these call for so much intrigue and plotting, that I vow to you I'd as soon be a Carbonara or a Sanfedista as the wife of an aspiring middle-class Englishman.

"But to return. The county would not have us—we were rich, and we were City folk, and they deemed it an unpardonable pretension in us to come down amongst them. They refused our invitations, and sent us none of their own. We split with them, contested the election against them, and got beaten. We spent unheard-of monies, and bribed everybody that had not a vote for ten miles round. With universal suffrage, which I believe we promised them, we should have been at the head of the pole; but the freeholders were to a man opposed to us.

"I am told that our opponents behaved ungenerously and unjustly—perhaps they did; at all events, the end of the contest left us without a single acquaintance, and we stood alone in our glory of beaten candidature, after three months of unheard-of fatigue, and more meanness than I

like to mention. The end of all was, to shake the dust off our feet at Herefordshire, and advertise Earlsheope for sale. Meanwhile we returned to town; just as shipwrecked men clamber up the first rock in sight, not feeling in their danger what desolation is before them. I take it that the generals of a beaten army talk very little over their late defeat. At all events we observed a most scrupulous reserve, and I don't think that a word was dropped amongst us for a month that could have led a stranger to believe that we had just been beaten in an election, and hunted out of the county.

"I was just beginning to feel that our lesson, a severe one, it is true, might redound to our future benefit, when our eldest-born,—I call them all mine, Dora, though not one of them will say mamma to me,—discovered that there was an Irish estate to be sold, with a fine house, and fine grounds, and that if we couldn't be great folk in the grander kingdom, there was no saying what we might not be in the smaller one. This was too much for me. I accepted the Herefordshire expedition because it smacked of active service. I knew well we should be defeated, and I knew there would be a battle, but I could not consent to banishment. What had I done, I asked myself over and over, that I should be sent to live in Ireland?

"I tried to get up a party against the project, and failed. Augustus Bramleigh—our heir—was in its favour, indeed, its chief promoter. Temple, the second son, who is a secretary of embassy, and the most insufferable of puppies, thought it a 'nice place for us,' and certain to save us money; and John—Jack, they call him—who is in the navy, thinks land to be land, besides that, he was once stationed at Cork, and thought it a paradise. If I could do little with the young men, I did less with the girls. Marion, the eldest, who deems her papa a sort of divine-right head of a family, would not discuss the scheme; and Eleanor, who goes in for nature and spontaneous feeling, replied that she was overjoyed at the thought of Ireland, and even half gave me to understand that she was only sorry it was not Africa. I was thus driven to a last resource. I sent for our old friend, Doctor Bartlet, and told him frankly that he must order me abroad to a dry warm climate, where there were few changes of temperature, and nothing depressing in the air. He did the thing to perfection; he called in Forbes to consult with him. The case was very serious, he said. The lung was not yet attacked, but the bronchial tubes were affected. Oh, how grateful I felt to my dear bronchial tubes, for they have sent me to Italy. Yes, Dolly dearest, I am off on Wednesday, and hope within a week after this reaches you to be at your side, pouring out all my sorrows, and asking for that consolation you never yet refused me. And now, to be eminently practical, can you obtain for me that beautiful little villa that overlooked the Borghese Gardens—it was called the Villino Altieri. The old Prince Giuseppe Altieri, who used to be an adorer of mine, if he be alive may like to resume his ancient passion, and accept me for a tenant; all the more that I can afford to be liberal. Col. B. behaves well always

where money enters. I shall want servants, as I only mean to take from this, Rose and my groom. You know the sort of creatures I like; but, for any sake, be particular about the cook—I can't eat 'Romanesque'—and if there be a stray Frenchman wandering about, secure him. Do you remember dear old Pauletti, Dolly, who used to serve up those delicious little macaroni suppers long ago in our own room? Cheating us into gourmandism by the trick of deceit! Oh, what would I give to be as young again! To be soaring up to heaven, as I listened with closed eyes to the chaunt in the Sistine chapel, or ascending to another elysium of delight, as I gazed at the 'noble guard' of the Pope, who, while his black charger was caracoling, and he was holding on by the mane, yet managed to dart towards me such a look of love and devotion! and you remember, Dolly, we lived 'secondo piano,' at the time, and it was plucky of the man, considering how badly he rode. I yearn to go back there. I yearn for those sunsets from the Pincian, and those long rambling rides over the Campagna, leading to nothing but an everlasting dreaminess, and an intense desire that one could go on day after day in the same delicious life of unreality; for it is so, Dolly. Your Roman existence is as much a trance as anything ever was—not a sight nor sound to shock it. The swell of the organ and the odour of the incense follow you even to your pleasures, and, just as the light streams in through the painted windows with its radiance of gold and amber and rose, so does the Church tinge with its mellow lustre all that goes on within its shadow. And how sweet and soothing it all is. I don't know, I cannot know, if it lead to heaven, but it certainly goes in that direction, so far as peace of mind is concerned. What has become of Carlo Lambruschini? is he married? How good-looking he was, and how he sung. I never heard Mario without thinking of him. How is it that our people never have that velvety softness in their tenor voices; there is no richness, no latent depth of tone, and consequently no power of expression? Will his Eminence of the Palazzo Antinori know me again? I was only a child when he saw me last, and used to give me his 'benedizione.' Be sure you bespeak for me the same condescending favour again, Heretic though I be. Don't be shocked, dearest Dora, but I mean to be half converted, that is, to have a sort of serious flirtation with the Church; something that is to touch my affections, and yet not wound my principles; something that will surround me with all the fervour of the faith, and yet not ask me to sign the ordinances. I hope I can do this. I eagerly hope it, for it will supply a void in my heart which certainly neither the money article, nor the share list, nor even the details of a county contest, have sufficed to fill. Where is poor little Santa Rosa and his guitar? I want them, Dolly—I want them both. His little tinkling barcaroles were as pleasant as the drop of a fountain on a sultry night; and am I not a highly imaginative creature, who can write of a sultry night in this land of fog, east wind, gust, and gas-light. How my heart bounds to think how soon I shall leave it. How I could travesty the refrain, and cry, 'Rendez moi mon passeport,

ou laissez moi mourir.' And now, Dolly, darling, I have done. Secure me the villa, engage my people. Tanti Saluti to the dear cardinal,—as many loves to all who are kind enough to remember me. Send me a lasciapassare for my luggage—it is voluminous—to the care of the consul at Civita Vecchia, and tell him to look out for me by the arrival of the French boat, somewhere about the 20th or 21st; he can be useful with the custom-house creatures, and obtain me a carriage all to myself in the train.

"It is always more 'carino' to talk of a husband at the last line of a letter, and so I say, give dear Tino all my loves, quite apart and distinct from my other legacies of the like nature. Tell him, I am more tolerant than I used to be—he will know my meaning—that I make paper cigarettes just as well, and occasionally, when in high good-humour, even condescend to smoke one too. Say also, that I have a little chestnut cob, quiet enough for his riding, which shall be always at his orders; that he may dine with me every Sunday, and have one dish—I know well what it will be, I smell the garlic of it even now—of his own dictating; and if these be not enough, add that he may make love to me during the whole of Lent; and with this, believe me

"Your own doating sister,

"AUGUSTA BRAMLEIGH."

"After much thought and many misgivings I deemed it advisable to offer to take one of the girls with me, leaving it open, to mark my indifference, as to which it should be. They both, however, refused, and to my intense relief, declared that they did not care to come abroad; Augustus also protesting that it was a plan he could not approve of. The diplomatist alone opined that the project had anything to recommend it; but as his authority, like my own, in the family, carries little weight, we were happily outvoted. I have, therefore, the supreme satisfaction—and is it not such?—of knowing that I have done the right thing, and it has cost me nothing; like those excellent people who throw very devout looks towards heaven, without the remotest desire to be there."

CHAPTER III.

"THE EVENING AFTER A HARD RUN."

It was between eight and nine o'clock of a wintry evening near Christmas; a cold drizzle of rain was falling, which on the mountains might have been snow, as Mr. Drayton, the butler at the Great House, as Castello was called in the village, stood austere with his back to the fire in the dining-room, and as he surveyed the table, wondered within himself what could possibly have detained the young gentlemen so late. The hounds had met that day about eight miles off, and Colonel Bramleigh had actually put off dinner half-an-hour for them, but to no avail; and now

Mr. Drayton, whose whole personal arrangements for the evening had been so thoughtlessly interfered with, stood there musing over the wayward nature of youth, and inwardly longing for the time when, retiring from active service, he should enjoy the ease and indulgence his long life of fatigue and hardship had earned.

"They're coming now, Mr. Drayton," said a livery-servant, entering hastily. "George saw the light of their cigars as they came up the avenue."

"Bring in the soup, then, at once, and send George here with another log for the fire. There'll be no dressing for dinner to-day, I'll be bound," and imparting a sort of sarcastic bitterness to his speech, he filled himself a glass of sherry at the sideboard and tossed it off; only just in time, for the door opened, and a very noisy, merry party of four entered the room, and made for the fire.

"As soon as you like, Drayton," said Augustus, the eldest Bramleigh, a tall, good-looking, but somewhat stern-featured man of about eight-and-twenty. The second, Temple Bramleigh, was middle-sized, with a handsome but somewhat over-delicate-looking face, to which a simpering affectation of imperturbable self-conceit gave a sort of puppyism; while the youngest, Jack, was a bronzed, bright-eyed, fine-looking fellow, manly, energetic, and determined, but with a sweetness when he smiled and showed his good teeth that implied a soft and very impressionable nature. They were all in scarlet coats, and presented a group strikingly good-looking and manly. The fourth of the party was, however, so eminently handsome, and so superior in expression as well as lineament, that the others seemed almost vulgar beside him. He was in black coat and cords, a checked cravat seeming to indicate that he was verging, so far as he might, on the limits of hunting costume; for George L'Estrange was in orders, and the curate of the parish in which Castello stood. It is not necessary to detain the reader by any lengthened narrative of the handsome young parson. Enough to say, that it was not all from choice he had entered the Church,—narrow fortune, and the hope of a small family living, deciding him to adopt a career which to one who had the passion for field-sports seemed the very last to gratify his tastes. As a horseman he was confessedly the first in the country round; although his one horse—he was unable to keep a second—condemned him to rare appearance at the meets. The sight of the parson and his black mare, Nora Creina, in the field, were treated with a cheer, for he was a universal favourite, and if a general suffrage could have conferred the episcopate, George would have had his mitre many a day ago.

So sure a seat and so perfect a hand needed never to have wanted a mount. There was not a man with a stable who would not have been well pleased to see his horse ridden by such a rider; but L'Estrange declined all such offers—a sensitive fear of being called a hunting parson deterred him; indeed it was easy to see by the rarity with which he permitted himself the loved indulgence, what a struggle he maintained

between will and temptation, and how keenly he felt the sacrifice he imposed upon himself.

Such, in brief, was the party who were now seated at table, well pleased to find themselves in presence of an admirable dinner, in a room replete with every comfort. The day's run, of course, formed the one topic of their talk, and a great deal of merriment went on about the sailor-like performances of Jack, who had been thrown twice, but on the whole acquitted himself creditably, and had taken one high bank so splendidly as to win a cheer from all who saw him.

"I wish you had not asked that poor Frenchman to follow you, Jack," said Augustus; "he was really riding very nicely till he came to that unlucky fence."

"I only cried out, 'Venez donc, monsieur,' and when I turned my head, after clearing the bank, I saw his horse with his legs in the air and monsieur underneath."

"When I picked him up," broke in L'Estrange, "he said, 'Merci, mille fois, monsieur,' and then fainted off, the poor fellow's face actually wearing the smile of courtesy he had got up to thank me."

"Why will Frenchmen try things that are quite out of their beat?" said Jack.

"That's a most absurd prejudice of yours, Master Jack," cried the diplomatist. "Frenchmen ride admirably, nowadays. I've seen a steeple-chase in Normandy, over as stiff a course, and as well ridden as ever Leicestershire witnessed."

"Yes, yes; I've heard all that," said the sailor, "just as I've heard that their iron fleet is as good, if not better than our own."

"I think our own newspapers rather hint that," said L'Estrange.

"They do more," said Temple; "they prove it. They show a numerical superiority in ships, and they give an account of guns, and weight of metal dead against us."

"I'll not say anything of the French; but this much I will say," cried the sailor; "the question will have to be settled one of these days, and I'm right glad to think that it cannot be done by writers in newspapers."

"May I come in?" cried a soft voice; and a very pretty head, with long fair ringlets, appeared at the door.

"Yes. Come by all means," said Jack; "perhaps we shall be able, by your help, to talk of something besides fighting Frenchmen."

While he spoke, L'Estrange had risen, and approached to shake hands with her.

"Sit down with us, Nelly," said Augustus, "or George will get no dinner."

"Give me a chair, Drayton," said she; and, turning to her brother, added, "I only came in to ask some tidings about an unlucky foreigner; the servants have it he was cruelly hurt, some think hopelessly."

"There's the culprit who did the mischief," said Temple, pointing to Jack; "let him recount his feat."

"I'm not to blame in the least, Nelly. I took a smashing high bank, and the little Frenchman tried to follow me and came to grief."

"Ay, but you challenged him to come on," said Temple. "Now, Master Jack, people don't do that sort of thing in the hunting-field."

"I said, 'Come along, monsieur,' to give him pluck. I never thought for a moment he was to suffer for it."

"But is he seriously hurt?" asked she.

"I think not," said L'Estrange; "he seemed to me more stunned than actually injured. Fortunately for him they had not far to take him, for the disaster occurred quite close to Duckett's Wood, where he is stopping."

"Is he at Longworth's?" asked Augustus.

"Yes. Longworth met him up the Nile, and they travelled together for some months, and when they parted, it was agreed they were to meet here at Christmas; and though Longworth had written to apprise his people they were coming, he has not appeared himself, and the Frenchman is waiting patiently for his host's arrival."

"And laming his best horse in the meanwhile. That dark bay will never do another day with hounds," said Temple.

"She was shaky before, but she is certainly not the better of this day's work. I'd feed her, and turn her out for a full year," said Augustus.

"I suppose that's another of those things in which the French are our superiors," muttered Jack, "but I suspect, I'd think twice about it before I'd instal myself in a man's house, and ride his horses in his absence."

"It was the host's duty to be there to receive him," said Temple, who was always on the watch to make the sailor feel how little he knew of society and its ways.

"I hope when you've finished your wine," said Ellen, "you'll not steal off to bed, as you did the other night, without ever appearing in the drawing-room."

"L'Estrange shall go, at all events," cried Augustus. "The church shall represent the laity."

"I'm not in trim to enter a drawing-room, Miss Bramleigh," said the curate, blushing. "I wouldn't dare to present myself in such a costume."

"I declare," said Jack, "I think it becomes you better than your Sunday rig; don't you, Nelly?"

"Papa will be greatly disappointed, Mr. L'Estrange, if he should not see you," said she, rising to leave the room; "he wants to hear all about your day's sport, and especially about that poor Frenchman. Do you know his name?"

"Yes, here's his card;—Anatole de Pracontal."

"A good name," said Temple, "but the fellow himself looks a snob."

"I call that very hard," said Jack, "to say what any fellow looks like when he is covered with slush and dirt, his hat smashed, and his mouth full of mud."

"Don't forget that we expect to see you," said Ellen, with a nod and a smile, to the curate, and left the room.

"And who or what is Mr. Longworth?" said Temple.

"I never met him. All I know is, that he owns that very ugly red brick house, with the three gables in front, on the hill-side as you go towards Newry," said Augustus.

"I think I can tell you something about him," said the parson; "his father was my grandfather's agent. I believe he began as his steward, when we had property in this county; he must have been a shrewd sort of man, for he raised himself from a very humble origin to become a small estated proprietor and justice of the peace; and when he died, about four years ago, he left Philip Longworth something like a thousand a year in landed property, and some ready money besides."

"And this Longworth, as you call him,—what is he like?"

"A good sort of fellow, who would be better if he was not possessed by a craving ambition to know fine people, and move in their society. Not being able to attain the place he aspires to in his own county, he has gone abroad, and affects to have a horror of English life and ways, the real grievance being his own personal inability to meet acceptance in a certain set. This is what I hear of him; my own knowledge is very slight. I have ever found him well-mannered and polite, and except a slight sign of condescension, I should say pleasant."

"I take it," said the sailor, "he must be an arrant snob."

"Not necessarily, Jack," said Temple. "There is nothing ignoble in a man's desire to live with the best people, if he do nothing mean to reach that goal."

"Whom do you call the best people, Temple?" asked the other.

"By the best people, I mean the first in rank and station. I am not speaking of their moral excellence, but of their social superiority, and of that pre-eminence which comes of an indisputable position, high name, fortune, and the world's regards. These I call the best people to live with."

"And I do not," said Jack, rising, and throwing his napkin on the table, "not at least for men like myself. I want to associate with my equals. I want to mix with men who cannot overbear me by any accident of their wealth or title."

"Jack should never have gone into the navy, that's clear," said Augustus, laughing, "but let us draw round the fire and have a cigar."

"You'll have to pay your visit to the drawing-room, L'Estrange," said Jack, "before we begin to smoke, for the governor hates tobacco, and detects it in an instant."

"I declare," said the parson, as he looked at his splashed cords and dirty boots, "I have no courage to present myself in such a trim as this."

"Report yourself and come back at once," cried Jack.

"I'd say, don't go in at all," said Temple.

"That's what I should do, certainly," said Augustus. "Sit down here. What are you drinking. This is Pomare, and better than claret of a cold evening."

And the curate yielded to the soft persuasion, and seated around the fire, the young men talked horses, dogs, and field-sports, till the butler came to say that tea was served in the drawing-room, when, rising, they declared themselves too tired to stay up longer, and wishing each other good-night, they sauntered up to their rooms to bed.

CHAPTER IV.

ON THE CROQUET LAWN.

THE day after a hard run, like the day after a battle, is often spent in endeavours to repair the disasters of the struggle. So was it here. The young men passed the morning in the stables, or going back and forward with bandages and liniments. There was a tendon to be cared for, a sore back to be attended to. Benbo, too, wouldn't feed; the groom said he had got a surfeit; which malady, in stable parlance, applies to excess of work, as well as excess of diet.

Augustus Bramleigh was, as becomes an eldest son, grandly imperious and dictatorial, and looked at his poor discomfited beast, as he stood with hanging head and heaving flanks, as though to say it was a disgraceful thing for an animal that had the honour to carry him to look so craven and disheartened. Temple, with the instincts of his craft and calling, cared little for the past, and took but small interest in the horse that was not likely to be soon of use to him; while Jack, with all a sailor's energy, worked away manfully, and assisted the grooms in every way he could. It was at the end of a very active morning, that Jack was returning to the house, when he saw L'Estrange's pony-chaise at the door, with black Nora in the shafts, as fresh and hearty to all seeming as though she had not carried her heavy owner through one of the stiffest runs of the season only the day before.

"Is your master here, Bill?" asked Jack of the small urchin, who barely reached the bar of the bit.

"No, sir; it's Miss Julia has druv' over. Master's fishing this morning."

Now Julia L'Estrange was a very pretty girl, and with a captivation of manner which to the young sailor was irresistible. She had been brought up in France, and imbibed that peculiar quiet coquetry which, in its quaint demureness, suggests just enough doubt of its sincerity to be provocative. She was dark enough to be a Spaniard from the south of Spain, and her long black eyelashes were darker even than her eyes. In her walk and her gesture there was that also which reminded one of Spain: the same blended litheness and dignity; and there was a firmness in her tread which took nothing from its elasticity.

When Jack heard that she was in the house, instead of hurrying in to

meet her he sat moodily down on the steps of the door and lighted his cigar. "What's the use?" muttered he, and the same depressing sentence recurred to him again and again. They are very dark moments in life in which we have to confess to ourselves that, fight how we may, fate must beat us; that the very utmost we can do is to maintain a fierce struggle with destiny, but that in the end we must succumb. The more frequently poor Jack saw her, the more hopelessly he felt his lot. What was he,—what could he ever be, to aspire to such a girl as Julia? Was not the very presumption a thing to laugh at? He thought of how his elder brother would entertain such a notion; the cold solemnity with which he would ridicule his pretensions; and then Temple would treat him to some profound reflections on the misery of poor marriages; while Marion would chime in with some cutting reproaches on the selfishness with which, to gratify a caprice—she would call it a caprice—he ignored the just pretensions of his family, and the imperative necessity that pressed them to secure their position in the world by great alliances. This was Marion's code: it took three generations to make a family; the first must be wealthy; the second, by the united force of money and ability, secure a certain station of power and social influence; the third must fortify these by marriages—marriages of distinction; after which mere time would do the rest.

She had hoped much from her father's second marriage, and was grievously disappointed on finding how her stepmother's family affected displeasure at the match as a reason for a coldness towards them; while Lady Augusta herself as openly showed that she had stooped to the union merely to secure herself against the accidents of life and raise her above the misery of living on a very small income.

Jack was thinking moodily over all these things as he sat there, and with such depression of spirit that he half resolved, instead of staying out his full leave, to return to his ship at Portsmouth, and so forget shore life and all its fascinations. He heard the sound of a piano, and shortly after the rich delicious tones of Julia's voice. It was that mellow quality of sound musicians call mezzo soprano, whose gift it is to steal softly over the senses and steep them in a sweet rapture of peaceful delight. As the strains floated out, he felt as though the measure of incantation was running over for him, and he arose with a bound and hurried off into the wood. "I'll start to-morrow. I'll not let this folly master me," muttered he. "A fellow who can't stand up against his own fancies is not worth his salt. I'll go on board again and think of my duty," and he tried to assure himself that of all living men a sailor had least excuse for such weaknesses as these.

He had not much sympathy with the family ambitions. He thought that as they had wealth enough to live well and handsomely, a good station in the world, and not any one detracting element from their good-luck, either as regarded character or health, it was downright ingratitude to go in search of disappointments and defeats. It was, to his thinking,

like a ship with plenty of sea-room rushing madly on to her ruin amongst the breakers. "I think Nelly is of my own mind," said he, "but who can say how long she will continue to be so? these stupid notions of being great folk will get hold of her at last. The high-minded Marion and that great genius Temple are certain to prevail in the end, and I shall always be a splendid example to point at and show the melancholy consequences of degenerate tastes and ignoble ambitions."

The sharp trot of a horse on the gravel road beside him startled him in his musings, and the pony-carriage whisked rapidly by. Augustus driving and Julia at his side. She was laughing. Her merry laugh rang out above the brisk jingle of horse and harness, and to the poor sailor it sounded like the knell of all his hopes. "What a confounded fool I was not to remember I had an elder brother," said he, bitterly. That he added something inaudible about the perfidious nature of girls is possibly true, but not being in evidence it is not necessary to record it.

Let us turn from the disconsolate youth to what is certes a prettier picture—the croquet lawn behind the house, where the two sisters, with the accomplished Temple, were engaged at a game.

"I hope, girls," said he, in one of his very finest drawls, "the future head of house and hopes is not going to make a precious fool of himself."

"You mean with the curate's sister," said Marion, with a saucy toss of her head. "I scarcely think he could be so absurd."

"I can't see the absurdity," broke in Ellen. "I think a duke might make her a duchess, and no great condescension in the act."

"Quite true, Nelly," said Temple; "that's exactly what a duke might do; but Mr. Bramleigh cannot. When you are at the top of the ladder, there's nothing left for you but to come down again; but the man at the bottom has to try to go up."

"But why must there be a ladder at all, Temple?" asked she eagerly.

"Isn't that speech Nelly all over?" cried Marion haughtily.

"I hope it is," said Ellen, "if it serves to convey what I faithfully believe,—that we are great fools in not enjoying a very pleasant lot in life instead of addressing ourselves to ambitions far and away beyond us."

"And which be they?" asked Temple, crossing his arms over his mallet, and standing like a soldier on guard.

"To be high and titled, or if not titled, to be accepted amongst that class, and treated as their equals in rank and condition."

"And why not, Nelly? What is this wonderful ten thousand that we all worship? Whence is it recruited, and how? These double wallflowers are not of Nature's making; they all come of culture, of fine mould, careful watering, and good gardening. They were single-petalled once on a time, like ourselves. Mind, it is no radical says this, girls—'moi qui vous parle' am no revolutionist, no leveller! I like these grand conditions, because they give existence its best stimulus, its noblest aspirations. The higher

one goes in life—as on a mountain—the more pure the air and the wider the view.”

“And do you mean to tell me that Augustus would consult his happiness better in marrying some fine lady, like our grand stepmamma, for instance, than a charming girl like Julia?” said Ellen.

“If Augustus’ notions of happiness were to be measured by mine, I should say yes, unquestionably yes. Love is a very fleeting sentiment. The cost of the article, too, suggests most uncomfortable reflections. All the more as the memory comes when the acquisition itself is beginning to lose value. My former chief at Munich—the cleverest man of the world I ever met—used to say, as an investment, a pretty wife was a mistake. ‘If,’ said he, ‘you laid out your money on a picture, your venture might turn out a bargain; if you bought a colt, your two-year-old might win a Derby; but your beauty of to-day will be barely good-looking in five years, and will be a positive fright in fifteen.’”

“Your accomplished friend was an odious beast!” said Nelly. “What was his name, Temple?”

“Lord Culduff. One of the first diplomatists in Europe.”

“Culduff? How strange! Papa’s agent, Mr. Harding, mentioned the name at breakfast. He said there was a nobleman come over from Germany to see his estates in the north of Down, where they had some hopes of having discovered coal.”

“Is it possible Lord Culduff could be in our neighbourhood? The governor must ask him here at once,” said Temple, with an animation of manner most unusual with him. “There must be no time lost about this. Finish your game without me, girls, for this matter is imminent;” and so saying, he resigned his mallet and hastened away to the house.

“I never saw Temple so eager about anything before,” said Nelly. “It’s quite charming to see how the mere mention of a grand name can call forth all his energy.”

“Temple knows the world very well; and he knows how the whole game of life is conducted by a very few players, and that every one who desires to push his way must secure the intimacy, if he can, or at least the acquaintance, of these.” And Marion delivered this speech with a most oracular and pretentious tone.

“Yes,” said Nelly, with a droll sparkle in her eye; “he declared that profound statement last evening in the very same words. Who shall say it is not an immense advantage to have a brother so full of sage maxims, while his sisters are seen to catch up his words of wisdom, and actually believe them to be their own?”

“Temple may not be a Talleyrand; but he is certainly as brilliant as the charming Curate,” said Marion, tartly.

“Oh, poor George!” cried Nelly; and her cheek flushed while she tried to seem indifferent. “Nobody ever called him a genius. When one says he is very good-looking and very good-humoured, *tout est dit!*”

“He is very much out of place as a parson.”

"Granted. I suspect he thinks so himself."

"Men usually feel that they cannot take orders without some stronger impulse than a mere desire to gain a livelihood."

"I have never talked to him on the matter; but perhaps he had no great choice of a career."

"He might have gone into the army, I suppose? He'd have found scores of creatures there with about his own measure of intelligence."

"I fancied you liked George, Marion," said the other. And there was something half tender, half reproachful, in her tone.

"I liked him so far, that it was a boon to find anything so like a gentleman in this wild savagery; but if you mean that I would have endured him in town, or would have noticed him in society, you are strangely mistaken."

"Poor George!" and there was something comic in her glance as she sighed these words out.

"There; you have won," said Marion, throwing down her mallet. "I must go and hear what Temple is going to do. It would be a great blessing to see a man of the world and a man of mark in this dreary spot, and I hope papa will not lose the present opportunity to secure him."

"Are you alone, Nelly?" said her eldest brother, some time after, as he came up, and found her sitting, lost in thought, under a tree.

"Yes. Marion got tired and went in, and Temple went to ask papa about inviting some high and mighty personage who chances to be in our neighbourhood."

"Who is he?"

"Lord Culduff" he called him.

"Oh! a tremendous swell; an ambassador somewhere. What brings him down here?"

"I forget. Oh, it was something about a mine; he has found tin, or copper, or coal, I don't remember which, on some property of his here. By the way, Augustus, do you really think George L'Estrange a fool?"

"Think him a fool?"

"I mean," said she, blushing deeply, "Marion holds his intelligence so cheaply that she is quite shocked at his presuming to be in orders."

"Well, I don't think him exactly what Temple calls an 'esprit fort,' but he is a very nice fellow, very companionable, and a thorough gentleman in all respects."

"How well you have said it, dear Augustus," said she, with a face beaming with delight. "Where are you off to? Where are you going?"

"I am going to see the yearlings, in the paddock below the river."

"May I go with you, Gussy?" said she, drawing her arm within his.

"I do like a brisk walk with you; and you always go like one with a purpose."

CHAPTER V.

CONFIDENTIAL TALK.

TEMPLE found his father in his study, deeply engaged with a mass of papers and letters, and by the worn and fatigued expression of his face showing that he had passed a day of hard work.

"I hope I do not disturb you," said Temple, as he leaned on the table at which the other was seated.

"Throw that cigar away, and I'll tell you," said the old man, with a faint smile. "I never can conquer my aversion to tobacco. What do you want to say? Is it anything we cannot talk over at dinner, or after dinner?—for this post leaves at such an inconvenient hour, it gives me scant time to write."

"I beg a thousand pardons, sir; but I have just heard that a very distinguished member of our corps—I mean the diplomatic corps—is down in this neighbourhood, and I want your permission to ask him over here."

"Who is he?"

"Lord Culduff."

"What, that old scamp who ran away with Lady Clifford? I thought he couldn't come to England?"

"Why, sir, he is one of the first men we have. It was he that negotiated the Erzeroum treaty, and I heard Sir Stamford Bolter say he was the only man in England who understood the Sound dues."

"He ran off with another man's wife, and I don't like that."

"Well, sir, as he didn't marry her afterwards, it was clear it was only a passing indiscretion."

"Oh, indeed; that view of it never occurred to me. I suppose, then, it is in this light the corps regards it?"

"I trust so, sir. Where there is no complication there is no loss of character; and as Lord Culduff is received everywhere, and courted in the very best circles, I think it would be somewhat strange if we were to set up to teach the world how it ought to treat him."

"I have no such pretension. I simply claim the right to choose the people I invite to my house."

"He may be my chief to-morrow or next day," said Temple.

"So much the worse for you."

"Certainly not, sir, if we seize the opportunity to show him some attentions. He is a most high-bred gentleman, and both from his abilities, his rank, and his connections, sure to be at the head of the line; and I confess I'd be very much ashamed if he were to hear, as he is sure to hear, that I was in his vicinity without my ever having gone to wait on him."

"Go by all means, then. Wait upon him at once, Temple; but I tell you frankly, I don't fancy presenting such a man to your sisters."

"Why, sir, there is not a more unobjectionable man in all England; his manners are the very type of respectful deference towards ladies. He belongs to that old school which professes to be shocked with modern levity, while his whole conversation is a sort of quiet homage."

"Well, well ; how long would he stay—a week ?"

"A couple of days, perhaps, if he came at all. Indeed, I greatly doubt that he would come. They say he is here about some coal-mine they have discovered on his property."

"What, has he found coal ?" cried the old man, eagerly.

"So it is said, sir ; or, at least, he hopes so."

"It's only lignite. I'm certain, it's only lignite. I have been deceived myself twice or thrice, and I don't believe coal—real coal—exists in this part of Ireland."

"Of that, I can tell you nothing ; he, however, will only be too glad to talk the matter over with you."

"Yes ; it is an interesting topic,—very interesting. Snell says that the great carboniferous strata are all in Ireland, but that they lie deep and demand vast capital to work them. He predicts a great manufacturing prosperity to the country when Manchester and Birmingham will have sunk into ruins. He opines that this lignite is a mere indication of the immense vein of true carbon beneath. But what should this old debauchee know of a great industrial theme ! His whole anxiety will be to turn it to some immediate profit. He'll be looking for a loan, you'll see. Mark my words, Temple, he'll want an advance on his colliery." And he gave one of those rich chuckling laughs which are as peculiar to the monied classes as ever a simpering smile was to enamelled beauty.

"I don't say," added he, after a moment, "that the scheme may not be a good one—an excellent one. Sampson says that all manufactures will be transferred to Ireland yet,—that this will be in some future time the great seat of national industry and national wealth. Let your grand friend come then by all means ; there is at least one topic we can talk over together.

Too happy to risk the success he had obtained by any further discussion, Temple hurried away to give orders for the great man's reception. There was a small suite of rooms, which had been furnished with unusual care and elegance when it was believed that Lady Augusta would have honoured Castello with her presence. Indeed, she had so far favoured the belief as to design some of the decorations herself, and had photographs taken of the rooms and the furniture, as well as of the views which presented themselves from the windows.

Though these rooms were on the second floor, they were accessible from without by a carriage-drive, which wound gradually up among the terraced gardens to a sort of plateau, where a marble fountain stood, with a group of naiads in the midst, over whom a perpetual spray fell like a veil ; the whole surrounded with flowery shrubs and rare plants, sheltered from east and north by a strong belt of trees, and actually imparting to the favoured spot the character of a southern climate and country.

As the gardener was careful to replace the exhausted or faded flowers by others in full bloom, and as on every available day he displayed here the richest treasures of his conservatory, there was something singularly beautiful in the contrast of this foreground, glowing in tropical luxuriance,

with the massive forest-trees down below, and farther in the distance the stern and rugged lines of the Mourne Mountains, as they frowned on the sea.

Within doors, everything that wealth could contribute to comfort was present, and though there was magnificence in the costly silk of the hangings and the velvety richness of the carpets, the prevailing impression was that it was enjoyment, not splendour, was sought for. There were few pictures—a Rysdael over the fireplace in the drawing-room, and two or three Cuypers—placid scenes of low-lying landscapes, bathed in soft sunsets. The doors were all hidden by heavy curtains, and a sense of voluptuous snugness seemed the spirit of the place.

The keys of this precious suite were in Marion's keeping, and as she walked through the rooms with Temple, and expiated on the reckless expenditure bestowed upon them, she owned that for any less distinguished guest than the great diplomatist she would never have consented to their being opened. Temple, however, was loud in his praises, went over his high connections and titled relatives, his great services, and the immense reputation they had given him, and, last of all, he spoke of his personal qualities, the charm of his manner, and the captivation of his address, so that finally she became as eager as himself to see this great and gifted man beneath their roof.

During the evening they talked much together of what they should do to entertain their illustrious guest. There was, so to say, no neighbourhood, nor any possibility of having people to meet him, and they must, consequently, look to their home resources to amuse him.

"I hope Augustus will be properly attentive," said Temple.

"I'm certain he will. I'm more afraid of Nelly, if there be anything strange or peculiar in Lord Culduff's manner. She never puts any curb on her enjoyment of an oddity, and you'll certainly have to caution her that her humouristic talents must be kept in abeyance just now."

"I can trust Lord Culduff's manner to repress any tendency of this kind. Rely upon it, his courtly urbanity and high tone will protect him from all indiscretions; and Nelly—I'm sorry to say it, Marion—but Nelly is vulgar."

"She is certainly too familiar with fresh acquaintance. I have told her more than once that you do not always please people by showing you are on good terms with yourself. It is a great misfortune to her that she never was out before she came here. One season in town would have done more for her than all our precepts."

"Particularly as she heeds them so little," said Temple, snappishly.

"Cannot we manage to have some people to meet Lord Culduff at dinner? Who are the Gages who left their cards?"

"They sent them—not left them. Montague Gage is the master of the hounds, and, I believe, a person of some consideration here. He does not, however, appear to invite much intimacy. His note acknowledging our subscription—it was a hundred pounds too—was of the coldest, and we exchanged a very few formal words at the meet yesterday."

"Are we going to repeat the Herefordshire experiment here, then?" And she asked the question with a sparkling eye and a flushed cheek, as though the feeling it excited was not easily to be repressed.

"There's a Sir Roger Kennedy too has called."

"Yes, and Harding says he is married; but his wife's name is not on the card."

"I take it they know very little of the habits of the world. Let us remember, Marion, where we are. Iceland is next door but one. I thought Harding would have looked to all this; he ought to have taken care that the county was properly attentive."

"An agent never wishes to see his chief reside on the property. It is like in my own career,—one is only *chargé d'affaires* when the head of the legation is on leave."

"And this was the county, we were told, was ready to receive us with a sort of frantic enthusiasm. I wonder, Temple, do people ever tell the truth!"

"Yes, when they want you not to believe them. You see, Marion, we blundered here pretty much as we blundered in England. You'll not get the governor to believe it, nor perhaps even Augustus, but there is a diplomacy of every-day life, and people who fancy they can dispense with it invariably come to grief. Now I always told them—indeed I grew tired telling them—every mile that separates you from a Capital diminishes the power of your money. In the city you reign supreme, but to be a county magnate you need scores of things beside a long credit at your banker's."

A very impatient toss of the head showed that Marion herself was not fully a convert to these sage opinions, and it was with a half rude abruptness that she broke in by asking how he intended to convey his invitation to Lord Culduff.

"There's the difficulty," said he, gravely. "He is going about from one place to another. Harding says he was at Rathbeggan on Sunday last, and was going on to Dinasker next day. I have been looking over the map, but I see no roads to these places. I think your best plan is to despatch Lacy with a letter. Lacy is the smartest fellow we have, and I think will be sure to find him. But the letter, too, is a puzzle."

"Why should it be? It will be, I suppose, a mere formal invitation?"

"No, no. It would never do to say, Colonel Bramleigh presents his compliments, and requests—and so on. The thing must have another tone. It ought to have a certain turn of expression."

"I am not aware of what amount of acquaintanceship exists between you and Lord Culduff," said she stiffly.

"The very least in life. I suspect if we met in a club, we should pass without speaking. I arrived at his Legation on the morning he was starting on leave. I remember he asked me to breakfast, but I declined, as I had been three days and nights on the road, and wanted to get to bed. I never met him since. What makes you look so serious, Marion?"

"I'm thinking what we shall do with him if he comes. Does he shoot, or hunt, or fish?—can you give him any out-o'-door occupation?"

"I'm quite abroad as to all his tastes and habits. I only know so much of him as pertains to his character in the 'line;' but I'll go and write my note. I'll come back and show you what I have said," added he, as he gained the door.

When Marion was left alone to reflect over her brother's words, she was not altogether pleased. She was no convert to his opinions as to the necessity of any peculiar stratagem in the campaign of life. She had seen the house in town crowded with very great and distinguished company; she had observed how wealth asserted itself in society, and she could not perceive that in their acceptance by the world, there was any, the slightest deficiency of deference and respect. If they had failed in their county experiment in England, it was, she thought, because her father rashly took up an extreme position in politics, a mistake which Augustus indeed saw and protested against, but which some rash advisers were able to over-persuade the colonel into adopting.

Lady Augusta, too, was an evidence that the better classes did not decline this alliance, and on the whole she felt that Temple's reasonings were the offshoots of his peculiar set; that small priesthood of society who hold themselves so essentially above the great body of mankind.

"Not that we must make any more mistakes, however," thought she. "Not that we can afford another defeat;" and as she arrived at this sage judgment, Temple entered, with some sheets of note-paper in his hand.

"I'm not quite satisfied with any of these, Marion; I suspect I must just content myself with a mere formal 'requests the company.'"

"Let me hear what you have said."

"Here's the first," said he, reading. "'My dear Lord,—The lucky accident of your lordship's presence in this neighbourhood:—which I have only accidentally learned.'"

"O dear, no! that's a chapter of accidents."

"Well; listen to this one: 'If I can trust to a rumour that has just reached us here, but which, it is possible our hopes may have given a credence to, that stern fact will subsequently deny, or reject, or contradict.' I'm not fully sure which verb to take."

"Much worse than the other," said Marion.

"It's all the confounded language; I could turn it in French to perfection."

"But I fancied your whole life was passed in this sort of phrase-fashioning, Temple?" said she, half smiling.

"Nothing of the kind. We keep the vernacular only for post-paper, and it always begins: 'My Lord,—Since by my despatch, No. 7,028, in which I reported to your lordship the details of an interview accorded me by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of this Government;' and so on. Now all this, to the polite intercourse of society, is pretty much what singlestick is to the rapier. I wish you'd do this for me, Marion. After so many baulks, one always ends by a tumble."

"I declare I see no occasion for smartness or epigram. I'd simply

say, 'I have only just heard that you are in our neighbourhood, and I beg to convey my father's hope and request that you will not leave it without giving us the honour of your company here.' You can throw in as many of your personal sentiments as may serve, like wool in a packing-case, to keep the whole tight and compact; but I think something like that would suffice."

"Perhaps so," said he, musingly, as he once more returned to his room. When he reappeared, after some minutes, it was with the air and look of a man who had just thrown off some weighty burden. "Thank heaven, it's done and despatched," said he. "I have been looking over the F. O. Guide, to see whether I addressed him aright. I fancied he was a Privy Councillor, and I find he is not; he is a G.C., however, and a Guelph, with leave to wear the star."

"Very gratifying to us—I mean if he should come here," said she, with a mocking smile.

"Don't pretend you do not value all these things fully as much as myself, Marion. You know well what the world thinks of them. These distinctions were no more made by us than the money of the realm; but we use one of them like the other, well aware that it represents a certain value, and is never disputed."

"How old is your friend?"

"Well, he is certainly not young. Here's what F. O. contributes to his biography. 'Entered the army as cornet in the 2nd Life Guards, 1816.' A precious long time ago that. 'First groom of the bedchamber—promoted—placed on half-pay—entered diplomatic service—in—19; special mission to Hanover—made G.C.H.—contested Essex, and returned on a petition—went back to diplomacy, and named special envoy to Tehran.' Ah! now we are coming to his real career."

"Oh, dear. I'd rather hear about him somewhat earlier," said she, taking the book out of his hand, and throwing it on the table. "It is a great penalty to pay for greatness to be gibbeted in this fashion. Don't you think so, Temple?"

"I wish I could see myself gibbeted, as you call it."

"If tue will makes the way, we ought to be very great people," said she, with a smile, half derisive, half real. "Jack, perhaps not; nor Ellen. They have booked themselves in second-class carriages."

"I'll go and look up Harding; he is a secret sort of a fellow. I believe all agents assume that manner to every one but the head of the house and the heir. But perhaps I could manage to find out why these people have not called upon us; there must be something in it."

"I protest I think we ought to feel grateful to them; an exchange of hospitalities with them would be awful."

"Very likely; but I think we ought to have had the choice, and this they have not given us."

"And even for that I am grateful," said she, as with a haughty look she rose and left the room.

Slips on and off the Stage.

UNREHEARSED stage-effects have, from the very earliest times, produced consequences of a varied character, yet all of more or less importance. They have excited laughter, surprise, indignation, and they have occasionally conferred immortality on actors who would not otherwise have belonged, at least permanently, to fame.

Now, one player's name has lived upwards of two thousand years, for no other reason than that, four hundred and eight years before Christ, by a slip of the tongue, caused by a little breathlessness, itself a consequence of much emotion and passionate acting, he mispronounced a word, and nearly brought the *Orestes* of Euripides to grief before three hundred lines of it had been fairly declaimed. A trifle served at all times to disturb the equanimity of an Athenian audience. They loved well enough to be made to laugh by any *impromptu* in a comedy; but if the dignity of tragedy was tripped up by a slip on the part of the actor, although they might laugh quite as loudly, they were angry with themselves that they could be thus moved, and were still more irritated against the offender who had made them merry in spite of themselves.

This was what happened on the day *Orestes* was first acted at Athens. The public sat in silent but eager expectation before the tragedy began; a few, here and there, discussed the qualities of the author, who was a painter before he was a poet. Some of the orthodox shook their heads at a man who advocated free inquiry in religion, and who went with the Greek Colense, Anaxagoras, rather than with the believers in the inspiration which they found in the mythological revelations. One or two, unwilling to let scandal die, wondered that a man whose mother had sold (or was untruly said to have sold) watercress, should have been gifted to move the pulses of the heart so powerfully. Altogether, however, eager, silent expectation prevailed, and great was the relief when Electra at length appeared, and opened the long-awaited-for tragedy with the well-known comforting assurance, that there is no speech so sharp, no pain so acute, no calamity so heavy, but that human nature could be brought to the bearing it, by compulsion, if not voluntarily. The pretty scene between Electra and Helen had followed, and the intelligent Chorus had enunciated noisy recommendations that the sleeping but passion-tossed Orestes should not be disturbed in his slumbers, and then followed the great scene in which the madness of Orestes takes fresh possession of him, masters him for awhile, but, thanks to his sister Electra's tending and woman's cunning, passes slowly off, leaving the victim exhausted but alive.

The actor of this great part was Hegelochus, a handsome and accomplished tragedian, very popular with the Athenians, and much patronized by the richer sort, who carried him home in their chariots, and gave him honourable position at their festivals. Orestes had held the house in thrill by his terrific power. He had battled with the imaginary Furies, and turned in anguish to his visionary mother, and fought in unutterable agony against menacing calamities, and, at last, had bent his head upon that tender sisterly bosom, crushed, yet at peace. Gazing back, as if in distrust, he murmured, still breathless with agitation, "I look for the waves; but now *I see the calm*"—*γαλήνη ὄρω*—he *should* have said; but in his emotion and breathlessness, Hegelochus elided the final *a*, and said, with a musical sort of melancholy, *γαλήν' ὄρω*—"I see the cat." It must have sounded very absurd in Greek, or the theatre would not have exploded, first into such mirth, and next into such wrath as *did* shake the walls, and would have shaken the roof, if there had been one to the edifice. As it was, the unrehearsed effect was near bringing the piece at once to an end, especially as, when Orestes proceeded to stammer forth the inquiry, "Sister, wherefore do you weep, hiding your face beneath your vest?" every one saw that the poor lady was shaking with inextinguishable but silent laughter. With difficulty the piece proceeded; little explosions of mirth and of anger, because of the merry interruptions, would now and then break forth to mar the progress of the play; and we can fancy the additional ferocity with which Orestes, on one of those occasions, made direct application of the famous line, addressed to Pylades, but shot by the player into the very face of the audience, "The man who is not silent, we ought to kill!" Such is the history of the first unrehearsed stage-effect that has been put upon record.

On the Roman stage, some few unrehearsed effects have been recorded, but they are not of very great mark. Indeed, they have chiefly consisted in applications of speeches made by the actors,—the application being made by the audience,—to politics and political persons present. These speeches, if well delivered, were "encored" many times (in the Roman stage slang, "thousands of times"), till the actor was weary of repeating them. One actor, Paris, unwittingly obtained more applause than Nero, who was playing as an amateur, and the Emperor, forthwith, tossed the "glory and the grief of the Roman stage" to the executioner! The intercourse of English actors with English sovereigns has beep of a much more pleasant quality.

The legends that so pleasantly connect Shakspeare with Queen Elizabeth are not all perhaps to be taken to the letter; but there can be no doubt that they are founded on a broad basis of truth. There is one which narrates how the Queen, when Shakspeare was once acting in her presence, endeavoured to put him at pleasant perplexity between his sense of stage discipline and that of his loyal gallantry. After many a vain attempt, we are told that Elizabeth crossing the stage whereon the poet-actor was enacting the counterfeit presentment of a king, and engaged

in royal work, she dropped her glove. Shakspeare, without departing from the character he was illustrating, interpolated the original text with words to suit the action of his homage. He paused in a processional movement of which he made a part, exclaiming—

And though now bent on this high embassy,
Yet stoop we to pick up our cousin's glove—

and rendering it to her, with a profound bow, proudly strode off the stage.

We do not guarantee the authenticity of this anecdote, which (by the way) proves that Elizabeth *did* succeed in detaching the actor from the part which he was representing. This story, however, indicates how intimate the connection was then between the stage and the court.

Some slips on the old stage brought the offenders to great grief. For example, Pepys makes record of having gone to see *All's Lost by Lust*, in which the musical effects had been so ill rehearsed that singers and orchestra were all at odds, and universal discord reigned. One vocal lad was so out of tune and memory that his "master"—which may imply either the stage manager or the leader of the band—"fell about his ears, and beat him so that it put the whole house into an uproar." The circumstance must, therefore, have been unusual, even then: but at that time the discipline of the stage was rigorously enforced, and even tragedians of the first-class, who should allow themselves to smile at an involuntary slip, were visited by gravest censure.

Now and then instances have occurred in which the mispronunciation of a word has given it a meaning so incongruous as to cover the actor, who had been involuntarily guilty of it, with confusion. Audiences, or rather portions of audiences, not overburdened with refinement, have generally hailed these awkward slips with uproarious hilarity; the other portion has remained discreetly silent, as if it had lacked ears whereby to receive offence, or tongues to resent it. Downes, the old prompter of Charles II.'s days, has recorded one of these misfortunes. It occurred to a lady, Mistress Holden, a kinswoman of the great Betterton. She was playing in *Romeo and Juliet*, when a fatal word fell unintentionally from her lips; and as she happened at the moment to give it "vehement action," says Downes, "it put the house into such a laughter that London Bridge at low water was silence to it." Charles Kemble once slipped in a like direction; but the most amusing instance of an error committed by him against text and author was when he was once playing Shylock, and instead of asking, "Shall I lay perjury upon my soul?" overturned the text by exclaiming, "Shall I lay surgery upon my poll?" This is said to be—what Miss Edgeworth used to emphatically affirm of incidents in her stories—"Fact!" Less faith, we think, can be assigned to almost a better and better-known story, which made the soldier, who levels his halberd to prevent *Richard* from impeding the progress of *Henry's* funeral, with the remark, "My lord, stand back, and let the coffin pass!" exclaim, in his hurry and confusion, "My lord, stand back, and let the parson cough!"

Such a mistake, however, has many a parallel. On the French stage a young actor having to shout, "Sonnez, trompettes!" knocked all the majesty out of the command by his shout of, "Trompez, sonnettes!" And, indeed, the French stage can furnish a parallel to the story of the error of Mrs. Holden which made a full house so hilarious. The story is told in the correspondence of the Princess Palatine, under the date of 1719. She was then at Dunkirk, where the players acted in the presence of the court. One of them, performing *Mithridates*, happened, by unlucky change of a letter, to address to *Monime* a word that conveyed great offence in the utterance. The unlucky actor, in his confusion, made matters worse by turning to the royal box, in which the Dauphiness was the most conspicuous personage, and saying with great contrition, "Madam, I most humbly ask your pardon; my tongue unwittingly tripped me up!" The Dauphin was so tickled by this incident that he not only fell into an uncontrollable fit of laughter, but fell backwards from his seat. To save himself he grasped at the cord which kept the curtain up, and the curtain coming down by the run, struck against the lamps, and caught fire. The flames were immediately extinguished, but the curtain could not be raised, and the play was acted out, the audience looking at the performers through the gap caused by the fire.

One of the pleasantest incidents of the French court stage, however, occurred when the Emperor Napoleon jokingly hissed the Empress Josephine, who was acting a little operatic part in the theatre in the palace at St. Cloud. She demurely stepped forward and remarked, that any one of the audience who was dissatisfied with the performance might retire, and have his money returned to him at the doors. The consequent laughter was uproarious.

There are other slips on the stage than those made by words. At the beginning of the last century, on the French stage, the slipping of Baron's garter led to a traditional action observed in the part by every succeeding player; and the other night only, at the Variétés, the slipping of Mdle. Chaumont's petticoat produced an amusing unrehearsed effect. In the first case the great French actor was performing the *Earl of Essex*, and his garter slipped from below his knee, in the scene where only he and the traitor *Cecil* were on the stage. Such a personage *Essex* might treat with indifference or contempt; and accordingly he replaced the dropped band round his leg, while he continued to address *Cecil* in a disdainful tone. The effect was so successful that succeeding actors adopted the incident of affecting to tighten the garter as a good "bit of business," and the tradition continued to be observed as long as *Le Comte d'Essex* continued to be acted. Mdle. Chaumont's slip was of another character. It taxed her readiness in an emergency, and did not find her wanting. She was playing a *soubrette* in *Nos Gens*, and was engaged running to and fro to collect and burn the presents of various old lovers. In the very middle of her action she was impeded by her petticoat suddenly falling about her legs. Of course it was a very pretty article of its sort, and she got out of it, and

of the embarrassment which had come with it, by describing it as a tribute of admiration from one of her old admirers, which must be sacrificed like all the rest; and she thrust it into the stage-fire accordingly, with a merry laugh, and amid the general hilarity of the house.

The Baron mentioned above was one of the greatest actors of his time; but when he grew old, the cruel French audiences of the period, forgetting his past greatness, began to insult him, and as he was one night playing Nero, they even hissed him! The aged monarch of the stage folded his arms, walked sternly down to the footlights, and exclaimed, "Ungrateful pit! 'twas I who taught you!" It was a slip of the tongue, he used to say; but he was nettled that they who had been made by him judges of good acting should have turned their knowledge against their instructor.

An incident not altogether dissimilar to this once occurred to Edmund Kean, but in his early days. The Guernsey people could not comprehend his sensible and natural action, which implied that the audience part of the house was to the player as simply the fourth side of the room, or other imaginary locality, in which the poet had placed him. *Richard*, turning his back on the Guernsey pit, as if the performer ignored them, appeared to one-half an insult, to the other an absurdity; and they hissed and laughed at him accordingly, till, chafed and chaffed into ungovernable rage, he pointed to them with his sword,—which flashed less fire than darted from those then peerless eyes, and exclaimed, with fierce application of the line to the pit, "Unmannered dogs! stand ye when I command!" The pit resented the offence, as they construed it, with the utmost vociferation, and demanded an apology. Kean dropped his sword, put himself in an apologetic attitude, assumed a low voice, and said in his deep yet soft and penetrating tones, that he had been in error,—he had thought them to be without understanding, but he was mistaken, he added, since they had made a proper application of the few words he had just uttered!

One of the singular slips cited in connection with the French stage was made by Mongozzi, an actor of the old Variétés. The farce to be performed was called *The Piece without an A* (*Pièce sans A*). The author had written it without once using that letter, a feat which presents numerous difficulties in French, similar to that which has now and then been attempted and accomplished in English of writing a song without a sibilant, or without the letter *s*,—which is, after all, something more difficult than dancing a hornpipe in fetters. To see the French piece a considerable number of spectators had assembled; the audience did not expect a play of any merit, but they were curious to find how one of any length could be carried on without any use of what is in constant use in French phrases, the letter *a*. At the rising of the curtain, Duval and Mongozzi entered from different sides of the stage, and the latter, on seeing the former, greeted him with "Ah, monsieur, vous voilà!" While the house broke into a roar of laughter, Mongozzi was corrected by the prompter,

and he recommenced more correctly with "Eh, monsieur, vous voici!" Certainly, in a piece which boasted of having no *a* in it, the actor slipped drolly when he exclaimed, "Ah, sir, here you are!" instead of "Eh, sir, you here, then?"

This was the slip of a careless, not of a forgetful man. Very few actors have bad memories; some are of extraordinary quick study. Not long since, in the suddenly discovered absence of an actress, in a farce,—the curtain was just about to rise,—a young lady who had never played the part was asked to "go on," and she readily consented. She took the book in her hand, learnt a few lines at the wings, carried them with her on to the stage, learned a few more as she went to the back, busying herself apparently with what was on the chimney-piece, and came down to the front with what her memory gathered. The audience were unaware of the feat which was being performed, and it was accomplished with only one poor slip.

Very numerous are the stories of the slips, mistakes, transpositions, and wilful variations made from the author's true reading, by provincial actors. Many of these, however, are merely *ben trovato* stories; they at all events are not to be repeated with warrant of authenticity. At the same time the audacity or indifference of some country players has undoubtedly led to very exceptional sayings and doings on provincial stages. Whether the rural actor does not belong rather to romance than to reality, who is said to have maliciously spoilt a *point* which Mr. Macready used to make in *Richard*, by not only exclaiming, "My lord, the Duke of Buckingham is taken!" but adding the further information, "and we've cut off his head!"—cannot now be determined. There *is*, however, some warrant for another stray story in connection with this passage. Two strolling players were acting *Richard* and *Catesby*, at the Bullock-Smithy, or some equally elegant theatre. *Catesby*, ever eager to do well, went wrong, and missed his text. "My lord," he said, "the Duke of Richmond is taken!" Upon which, *Richard*, with humorous gravity upon his face, stepped forward and intimated to the house:—"If what this fellow says be strictly true, and Richmond now be held in durance vile, the play you see comes suddenly to end!" And nothing could be truer than that fact, although it was delivered in blank verse, to fashion which is to the actor sport. But we will not guarantee the genuineness of this story. The actors invent them as readily as the members of the Stock Exchange do conundrums.

Among the traits of stupidity put to the account of actors, by which droll unrehearsed effects have been produced on the stage, there is none that is supposed to convey greater proof of stupidity than that which distinguished the actor who originally represented *Lord Burghley* in the *Critic*. The names of several players are mentioned, each as being the hero of this story, but the original *Lord Burghley*, or *Burleigh*, was Irish Moody, far too acute an actor to be suspected for a fool. When Sheridan selected him for the part, the manager declared that Moody would be sure

to commit some ridiculous error, and ruin the effect. The author protested that such a result was impossible, and according to the fashion of the times a wager was laid, and Sheridan hurried to the performer of the part to give him such instructions as should render any mistake beyond possibility. Lord Burghley has nothing to say, merely to sit a while, and then, as the stage-directions informed him, and Sheridan impressed it on his mind, "*Lord Burghley comes forward, pauses near Dangle, shakes his head, and exit.*" The actor thoroughly understood the direction, he said, and could not err. At night he *came forward, did pass near Dangle*, shook his, *Dangle's*, head, and went solemnly off! Now, if this version of the story be correct, Moody must have been instructed by the manager so to act as to win the wager for him; he having backed Moody on the strength of his stupidity. On the other hand, if the story be really historical, the incident must have happened at rehearsal, and Moody have been substituted for some inefficient player originally cast for the character.

At this period great liberties were often taken by actors with audiences; and not very long before this, an unrehearsed stage-effect occurred which was connected with an act of impertinence on the part of a couple of players. Mrs. Griffiths' *Platonic Wife* was dragging its slow length along, wearying those on the stage as well as the audience in front. At the end of the third act the performers grew more impatient than the audience, and Holland and Powell, two respectable players, thrust their heads out from opposite sides of the stage when the "drop" was down, and earnestly appealed to the house to stop the piece by "damning" it then and there. The thing seems incredible, but the circumstance belongs to stage history; but nobler plays than the above lady's have been in peril.

Addison's "*Cato*" has been fertile in comic slips and serious consequences. Pope's magnificent prologue was in public favour only next to the play itself, but gradually it fell out of use. When the piece was reproduced in the last century for Sheridan, the part of *Portius* was assigned to an old utility-actor named Wignell, who had often played the part in his younger days. *Portius* opens the tragedy with these four lines:—

The dawn is over-cast, the morning low'rs,
And heavily in clouds brings on the day,—
The great, th' important day, big with the fate
Of Cato and of Rome!

Wignell uttered the first two lines amid a hurricane of shouts for the "prologue." He was one of those imperturbable actors who, if they are made to forget their *business*, stick close to the style of language they have to utter. Accordingly, he had scarcely pronounced the word "day" in the second line when, turning his head from *Marcus* to the audience, he continued, in the same lofty tone and measure,—

Ladies and gentlemen, there has not been
A prologue spoken to this play for years—

and then to *Marcus*, "The great, th' important day," and so on.

Editors, by copying one another, have added to the crop of errors that have grown over and about this poor old *Cato*. In Knox's edition of the *Elegant Extracts*, in Jonson's edition of Addison's works (1726), and in a copy of the play printed at Göttingen (1766), in a volume of *English Miscellanies* edited by John Tompson, the following passage occurs:—

The ways of Heav'n are dark and intricate,
Puzzled in mazes, and perplext with errors;
Our understanding traces them in vain,
Lost and bewilder'd in the fruitless search!

Well! this is rank blasphemy, which Addison, of course, never wrote. The words, indeed, are his, but not the sense which wrong punctuation gives to them. The semicolon belongs to the first line only,—

The ways of Heav'n are dark and intricate;

and then,—

Puzzled in mazes, and perplext in errors,
Our understanding traces them in vain, &c.

It is not the ways of Heaven that are puzzled and perplexed, but human understanding which is rather given to lose and bewilder itself under the circumstances described.

A single slip in this unlucky but popular tragedy of *Cato* cost a little Welsh actor his life. His name was Williams. Playing *Decius* to Quin's *Cato*, at the Lincoln's Inn Fields Theatre, in 1718, he entered with—"Cæsar sends health to Cato," but he pronounced the last name affectedly, mincing it into something like "Keeto." Quin, who gave a broad, classical enunciation to the letter *a* in the word, was offended, and instead of replying,—

Could he send it
To Cato's slaughtered friends, it would be welcome,

he exclaimed,—“Would he had sent a better messenger!” The fiery little Welshman was bursting with rage; and when *Cato* resumed with—“Are not your orders to address the senate?” he could hardly reply, “My business is with”—it *would* come—“Keeto.” Ten times in the short scene he had to repeat the name, and Quin nearly as often; but the latter gave it a broad sound, and delivered it with a significant look, which almost shook the little actor off his feet, and did shake all the sides of the house with inextinguishable laughter. When they met in the green-room, the Welshman, triply armed by having just ground of complaint, assailed Quin for rendering him ridiculous in the eyes of the audience. Quin said it was in their ears, and would have laughed the matter off. But the soul of Williams would not stoop to such treatment, and after the play he lay in wait for Quin, under the Piazza, as *Cato* passed that way to take his punch. The older actor laughed as Williams drew his sword and bade Quin defend himself. The latter would have sustained defence with his cane, but the angry Welshman thrust so fiercely that the other was fain to draw

his rapier, which speedily, without malice or intention on the part of the wielder, passed clear through the poor player's body. *Decius* was stretched dead on the pavement, and *Cato* looked on bewildered. Here was a man slain, and all for the mispronunciation of a vowel ! The tragedy brought *Quin* to the bar of the Old Bailey ; but the catastrophe was laid rather to the fashion of wearing swords than to the drawing them with evil purpose, and *Quin* was freed from censure, but not from sad memories.

Cato has led us away from *Cooke*, his slips, and the liberties he took with audiences. Although *George III.* once said that *Lord Thurlow* might as well play *Hamlet* as *Cooke*, *George Frederick* often acted the part, out of London. *Reynolds* tells us that when *Cooke* was once playing this part in Ireland, he was seen sharpening his sword before the fencing-match, and gave as a reason to curious inquirers :—" I and *Mr. Laertes* will to-night in reality settle our little disputes." The " young lady " who took interest in *Laertes* informed him of the peril in which he stood ; and accordingly, when the fencing-match came on, the son of *Polonius* rushed in on the heir of Denmark, seized him in his arms, gave him a back fall, planted his knee upon him, and looked from the astonished *George Frederick* to the astonished audience with the proud air of a man who had introduced a new reading, and had been remarkably successful.

Moderation or reserve were things not to be expected, generally, from *George Frederick Cooke*, though he could practise both when the gentlemanly humour was upon him, or when it otherwise suited his purpose. He on one occasion consented to go down from London to play *Cato*, for the benefit of a poor actor, a quondam friend, in a country theatre. It was the character which *Cooke* played worse than any of those for which he was ill-suited yet which he *would* play. The tragedy itself is not one that is likely to be well handled by a provincial company ; and on the occasion in question it met with supremely ill usage at very incompetent hands. All the appointments were bad, and what little of the text was remembered was delivered with many variations and a comic indifference to the rules of pronunciation. *Cooke*, however, was good-natured and tolerant. He swore a little, laughed a good deal, and bore with all, more or less patiently, till there was a general break-down, in the senate scene, owing to an universal forgetfulness of the text, which the most skilful of prompters could by no means remedy. This does not imply that *Cooke's* patience lasted long. In fact, he was only tolerant or amused while he looked on from the wing. The senate scene is in the second act, and it is the first in which *Cato* appears, as *Decius* says :—

In Utica,

And at the head of your own little senate !

Sempronius and *Lucius* had tumbled through their parts with much of that transposing of initial letters which came afterwards to be called " marowskying," and which often produces the most laughable effects ; and *Marcus* had referred to *Decius* as the " Knoman right," instead of " Roman knight ;" and *Cato* had just exclaimed, " Fathers, 'tis time you come to a

resolve," to which *Lucius* replied—not quite according to the text,—“That is exactly our way of thinking!” when Cooke’s (and *Cato’s*) endurance broke down. He started from his chair, and exclaiming, “With such a senate Rome itself were damned!” rushed off the stage, to the great admiration of the house, who, if they did not expect him to take his seat again, were certainly not disappointed.

Our ancestors, down to a time as late as our grandfathers’, certainly tolerated liberties taken with an audience by actors with a leniency that is the more surprising as the manners of the times were ruder, and the customs of a very ruffianly character. There are still individuals living who may have seen Edwin. At the close of his career, Edwin was playing *Bowkit*, in the *Son-in-Law*, at the Haymarket. In the scene where *Cranky* declines to accept him for a son-in-law, on account of his ugliness, Edwin uttered the word “ugly?” in a tone of surprise, and then advancing to the lamps, said, with great coolness and infinite impudence, “Now, I submit to the decision of an enlightened British public, which is the ugliest fellow of the three—I, old *Cranky*, or that gentleman in the front row of the balcony box?” The gentleman became the object, not of general pity, but of general and loud derision, and he retreated hastily from the humiliating consequences of the actor’s impertinence.

It is said that Parsons, who played *Cranky*, was very indignant with the freedom which Edwin took with him on this occasion; but no one offended more grossly in this respect than Parsons himself. He had no reverence even for persons who should be above insult if it were only because they are unable to resent it. Parsons, at the same theatre, was once playing one of the two workmen who build the scaffold (in the *Siege of Calais*) on which are to be executed *Eustache de St. Pierre* and his gallant comrades. In the course of his part he had to say, “So the king is coming? An’ the king like not my scaffold, he is no true man!” On a night that George III. was present, Parsons, instead of keeping to what was set down for him, approached the royal box, looked at the sovereign, and rudely exclaimed: “An’ the king were here, and didn’t admire my scaffold, I would say, ‘D—— him, he has no taste!’” It is said that the royal George was the first in the general laugh that broke forth, and the last to desist from such unseemly hilarity. If so, one can comprehend why he detected so much unintelligible nonsense in Shakspeare. For much less offence, Sir Robert Walpole went down from his box, and heartily caned an actor who had gone out of his part to make offensive allusion to him. The public sympathy was with the Minister.

There was far more justification for Mrs. Bellamy’s unrehearsed act and words towards the King of Denmark, when the latter was on a visit to George III. That extravagant beauty played *Alicia* in *Jane Shore* in presence of the Dane, who, wearied with very fast living, was in a sound sleep during one of her finest scenes. The angry lady had to exclaim, “Oh, thou false lord!” and she drew near to the slumbering monarch, and shouted it close to his ears, with such astounding effect that he

started up, rubbed his eyes, became conscious of what was going on and how it had come about, and remarked that he would not have such a woman for his wife though she had no end of kingdoms for a dowry.

But there are actors off, as well as on the stage, who have committed slips and produced effects which have been quite unpremeditated on their parts. These are persons who, belonging more or less to public life, are in that respect something of actors, wherever they happen to be, but especially if chance or supreme fortune bring them within the shadow of august majesty. In such presence, these individuals are apt to become a little perplexed and embarrassed when suddenly addressed, and to make little "slips" in their speech, which are laughable or unlucky according to circumstances. There is a notable instance in the case of the peeress who, in a brief conversation which George II. commenced with her one day at court, told the King that of all the sights in the world she was dying to see a coronation! *She* blushed. The King smiled sadly at the unexpected intelligence, and added, with good-natured gravity, that she might not have long to wait before her wish would be gratified.

Lady Northington, the wife of the swearing Lord Chancellor Northington, made a more ludicrous but a less offensive slip, in answer to a query put to her by George III. The King had asked her who had built Lord Northington's country-house,—the Grange,—and my lady, who was somewhat of an ignorant woman, replied, "*Indigo Jones.*" His Majesty, conscious or unconscious of the blunder, only remarked that he "thought so, from the style!" Lady Northington was not so ignorant as to be unaware of the mistake she had made, and she told her husband of it, with the King's comment. On this intimation the gallant Chancellor dryly observed that he could not, for the life of him, tell which was the greater fool, the King or herself.

There have been occasions when a little vanity has caused individuals, when before the public, to "lose their head" and control over their tongue. A slip of this sort, born of vanity, was once committed by Lord Camden. As he was coming out from St. James's at the end of a royal festival, Townsend, the police chief at all court doings, called aloud, "Lord Camden's carriage!—Lord Camden's carriage!" "Townsend," said my lord, in an undertone, to the great Bow Street runner, "the King has made me a marquis!" "Oh!" exclaimed the police superintendent, as he turned round to the chariots and charioteers, "Lord Camden's carriage.. *The King has made him a marquis!*" The newly-elevated peer could hardly forgive himself for having committed that little slip.

The marquis was the grandson of the Lord Chancellor Camden, whose family name was Pratt, and one of whose sons was the holder of many offices. On a new one being added to the half-dozen for which he was well paid and did little, *Sawyn*, who was one of those men who could never make a slip, except in the direction of wit, joyously exclaimed, "*Sat Prata biberunt!*" and even the country gentlemen roared.

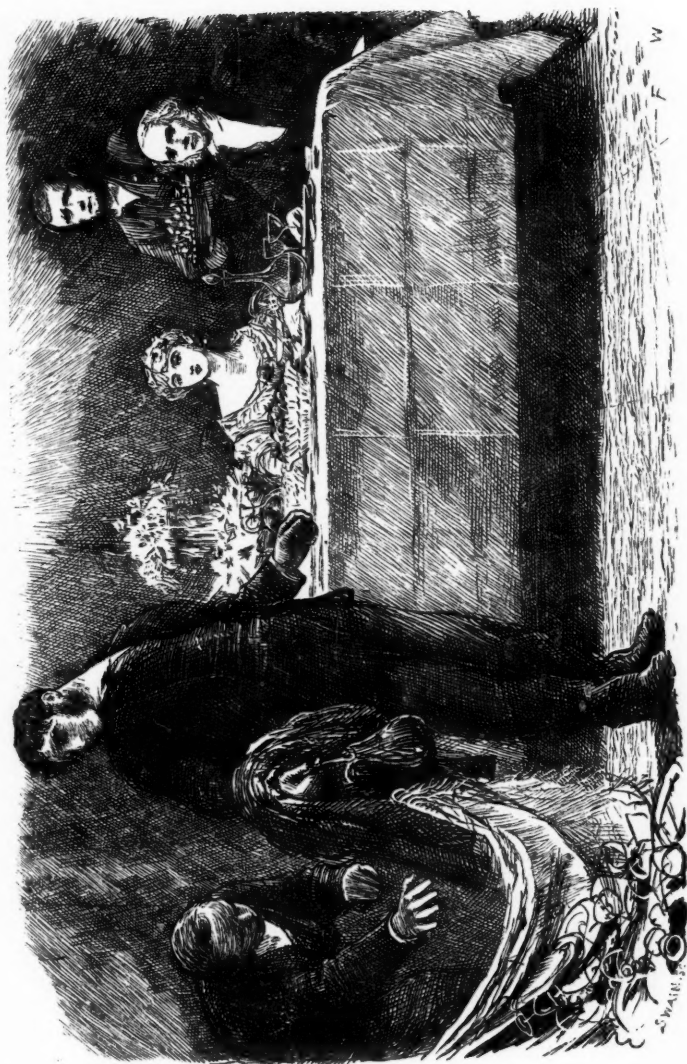
Beauty and the Beast.

I.



FAIRY times, gifts, music and dances are said to be over, or, as it has been said, they come to us so disguised and made familiar by habit that they do not seem to us strange. H. and I, on either side of the hearth, these long past winter evenings could sit without fear of fiery dwarfs skipping out of the ashes, of black puddings coming down the chimney to molest us. The clock ticked, the window-pane rattled. It was only the wind. The hearth-brush remained motionless on its hook. Pussy dozing on the hearth, with her claws quietly opening to the warmth of the blaze, purred on and never once startled us out of our usual placidity by addressing

us in human tones. The children sleeping peacefully upstairs were not suddenly whisked away and changelings deposited in their cribs. If H. or I opened our mouths pearls and diamonds did not drop out of them, but neither did frogs and tadpoles fall from between our lips. The looking-glass tranquilly reflecting the comfortable little sitting-room, and the stiff ends of H.'s cap-ribbons, spared us visions of wreathing clouds parting to reveal distant scenes of horror and treachery. Poor H. ! I am not sure but that she would have gladly looked in a mirror in which she could have sometimes seen the images of those she loved ; but our chimney-glass, with its gilt moulding and bright polished surface, reflects only such homely scenes as two old women at work by the fire, some little Indian children at play upon the rug, the door opening and Susan bringing in the tea-things. As for wishing-cloths and little boiling pots, and such like, we have discovered that instead of rubbing lamps, or spreading magic tablecloths upon the floor, we have but to ring an invisible bell (which is even less trouble), and a smiling genius in a white cap and apron brings in anything we happen to fancy. When the clock strikes twelve, H. puts up her work and lights her candle ; she has not yet been transformed into a beautiful



GUY GRIFITHS.

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princess all twinkling with jewels, neither does a scullion ever stand before me in rags ; she does not murmur farewell for ever and melt through the key-hole, but " Good-night," as she closes the door. One night at twelve o'clock, just after she had left me, there was indeed a loud orthodox ring at the bell, which startled us both a little ; H. came running down again without her cap, Susan appeared in great alarm from the kitchen. " It is the back-door bell, ma'am," said the girl, who had been sitting up over her new Sunday gown, but who was too frightened to see who was ringing.

I may as well explain that our little house is in a street, but that our back windows have the advantage of overlooking the grounds of the villa belonging to our good neighbour and friend Mr. Griffiths in Castle Gardens, and that a door opens out of our little back garden into his big one, of which we are allowed to keep the key. This door had been a postern gate once upon a time, for a bit of the old wall of the park is still standing, against which our succeeding bricks have been piled. It was a fortunate chance for us when our old ivy-tree died and we found the quaint little doorway behind it. Old Mr. Griffiths was alive then, and when I told him of my discovery he good-naturedly cleared the way on his side, and so the oak turned once more upon its rusty hinges to let the children pass through, and the nursemaid, instead of pages and secret emissaries and men-at-arms ; and about three times a year young Mr. Griffiths stoops under the arch on his way to call upon us. I say young Mr. Griffiths, but I suppose he is over thirty now, for it is more than ten years since his father died.

When I opened the door, in a burst of wind and wet, I found that it was Guy Griffiths who stood outside bareheaded in the rain, ringing the bell that winter night. " Are you up ? " he said. " For heaven's sake come to my mother, she's fainted ; her maid is away ; the doctor doesn't come. I thought you might know what to do." And then he led the way through the dark garden, hurrying along before me.

Poor lady, when I saw her I knew that it was no fainting-fit, but a paralytic stroke, from which she might perhaps recover in time ; I could not tell. For the present there was little to be done : the maids were young and frightened ; poor Guy wanted some word of sympathy and encouragement. So far I was able to be of use. We got her to bed and took off her finery, —she had been out at a dinner-party, and had been stricken on her return home,—Guy had discovered her speechless in the library. The poor fellow, frightened and overcome, waited about, trying to be of help, but he was so nervous that he tumbled over us all, and knocked over the chairs and bottles in his anxiety, and was of worse than no use. His kind old shaggy face looked pale, and his brown eyes *ringed* with anxiousness. I was touched by the young fellow's concern, for Mrs. Griffiths had not been a tender mother to him. How she had snapped and laughed at him, and frightened him with her quick sarcastic tongue and hard unmotherlike ways. I wondered if she thought of this as she lay there cold, rigid, watching us with glassy senseless eyes.

The payments and debts and returns of affection are at all times hard to reckon. Some people pay a whole treasury of love in return for a stone, others deal out their affection at interest, others again take everything, to the uttermost farthing, and cast it into the ditch and go their way and leave their benefactor penniless and a beggar. Guy himself, hard-headed as he was, and keen over his ledgers in Moorgate Street, could not have calculated such sums as these. All that she had had to give, all the best part of her shallow store, poor Julia Griffiths had paid to her husband, who did not love her: to her second son, whose whole life was a sorrow to his parents. When he died she could never forgive poor Guy for living still, for being his father's friend and right hand, and sole successor. She had been a real mother to Hugh, who was gone; to Guy, who was alive still and patiently waiting to do her bidding, she had shown herself only a stepdame; and yet I am sure no life-devoted mother could have been more anxiously watched and tended by her son. Perhaps—how shall I say what I mean?—if he had loved her more and been more entirely one with her now, his dismay would have been less, his power greater to bear her pain, to look on at her struggling agony of impotence. Even pain does not come between the love of people who really love.

The doctor came and went, leaving some comfort behind him. Guy sat up all that night burning logs on the fire in the dressing-room, out of the bedroom in which Mrs. Griffiths was lying. Every now and then I went into him and found him sitting over the hearth shaking his great shaggy head, as he had a way of doing, and biting his fingers, and muttering, "Poor soul, poor mother." Sometimes he would come in creaking on tiptoe; but his presence seemed to agitate the poor woman, and I was obliged to motion him back again. Once when I went in and sat down for a few minutes in an arm-chair beside him, he suddenly began to tell me that there had been trouble between them that morning. "It made it very hard to bear," he said. I asked him what the trouble had been. "I told her I thought I should like to marry," Guy confessed with a rueful face. (Even then I could hardly help smiling.) "Selfish beast that I am. I upset her, poor soul. I behaved like a brute." His distress was so great that it was almost impossible to console him, and it was in vain to assure him that the attack had been produced by physical causes. "Do you want to marry any one in particular?" I asked at last, to divert his thoughts, if I could, from the present. "No," said he; "at least—of course she is out of the question—only I thought perhaps some day I should have liked to have a wife and children and a home of my own. Why, the counting-house is not so dreary as this place sometimes seems to me." And then, though it was indeed no time for love-confidences, I could not help asking him who it was that was out of the question.

Guy Griffiths shrugged his great round shoulders impatiently, and gave something between a groan and sigh, and a smile,—(dark and sulky as he looked at times, a smile brightened up his grim face very pleasantly).

"She don't even know my name," he said. "I saw her one night at the play, and then in a lane in the country a little time after.—I found out who she was. She's a daughter of old Barly the stockbroker. Belinda they call her—Miss Belinda. It's rather a silly name, isn't it?" (This, of course, I politely denied.) "I'm sure I don't know what there is about her," he went on in a gentle voice; "all the fellows down there were head over ears in love with her. I asked—in fact I went down to Farmborough in hopes of meeting her again. I never saw such a sweet young creature—never. I never spoke to her in my life." "But you know her father?" I asked. "Old Barly?—Yes," said Guy. "His wife was my father's cousin, and we are each other's trustees for some money which was divided between me and Mrs. Barly. My parents never kept up with them much, but I was named trustee in my father's place when he died. I didn't like to refuse. I had never seen Belinda then. Do you like sweet sleepy eyes that wake up now and then? Was that my mother calling?" For a minute he had forgotten the dreary present. It all came rushing back again. The bed creaked, the patient had moved a little on her pillow, and there was a gleam of some intelligence in her pinched face. The clock struck four in quick tinkling tones; the rain seemed to have ceased, and the clouds to be parting; the rooms turned suddenly chill though the fires were burning.

When I went home, about five o'clock, all the stars had come out and were shooting brilliantly overhead. The garden seemed full of a sudden freshness and of secret life stirring in the darkness; the sick woman's light was burning faintly, and in my own window the little bright lamp was flickering which H.'s kind fingers had trimmed and put there ready for me when I should return. When we reached the little gate Guy opened it and let me pass under some dripping green creeper which had been blown loose from the wall. He took my old hand in both his big ones, and began to say something that ended in a sort of inarticulate sound as he turned away and trudged back to his post again. I thought of the many meetings and partings at this little postern gate, and last words and protestations. Some may have been more sentimental perhaps than this one, but Guy's grunt of gratitude was more affecting to me than many a long string of words. I felt very sorry for him, poor old fellow, as I barred the door and climbed upstairs to my room. He sat up watching till the morning. But I was tired and soon went to sleep.

II.

SOME people do very well for a time. Chances are propitious, the way lies straight before them up a gentle inclined plane, with a pleasant prospect on either side. They go rolling straight on, they don't exactly know how, and take it for granted that it is their own prudence and good driving and deserts which have brought them prosperously so far upon their journey. And then one day they come to a turnpike and destiny pops out of its little box and demands a toll, or prudence trips, or good sense

shies at a scarecrow put up by the wayside,—or nobody knows why, but the whole machine breaks down on the road and can't be set going again. And then other vehicles go past it, hand-trucks, perambulators, cabs, omnibuses, and great prosperous barouches, and the people who were sitting in the broken-down equipage get out and walk away on foot.

On that celebrated and melancholy Black Monday of which we have all heard, poor John Barly and his three daughters came down the carpeted steps of their comfortable sociable for the last time and disappeared at the wicket of a little suburban cottage,—disappeared out of the prosperous, pompous, highly-respectable circle in which they had gyrated, dragged about by two fat bay horses, in the greatest decorum and respectability; dining out, receiving their friends, returning their civilities. Miss Barlys had left large cards with their names engraved upon them in return for other large cards upon which were inscribed equally respectable names, and the addresses of other equally commodious family mansions. A mansion—so the house-agents tell us—is a house like another with the addition of a back staircase. The Barlys and all their friends had back staircases to their houses and to their daily life as well. They only wished to contemplate the broad, swept, carpeted drawing-room flights. Indeed to Anna and Fanny Barly this making the best of things, card-leaving and visiting, seemed a business of vital importance. The youngest of the girls, who had been christened by the pretty silly name of Belinda, had only lately come home from school, and did not value these splendours and proprieties so highly as her sisters did. She had no great love for the life they led. Sometimes looking over the balusters of their great house in Capulet Square she had yawned out loud from very weariness, and then she would hear the sound echoing all the way up to the skylight and reverberating down from Baluster to baluster. If she went into the drawing-room, instead of the yawning echoes the shrill voices of Anna and of Fanny were vibrating monotonously as they complimented Lady Ogden upon her new barouche, until Belinda could bear it no longer and would jump up and run away to her bedroom to escape it all. She had a handsome bedroom, draped in green damask, becarpeted, four-posted, with an enormous mahogany wardrobe of which poor Belle was dreadfully afraid, for the doors would fly open of their own accord in the dead of night, revealing dark abysses and depths unknown, with black ghosts hovering suspended or motionless and biding their time. There were other horrors: shrouds waving in the blackness, feet stirring, and low creakings of garotters, which she did not dare to dwell upon as she hastily locked the doors and pushed the writing-table against them.

It must therefore be confessed, that to Belinda the days had been long and oppressive sometimes in this handsomely appointed Tyburnean palace. Anna, the eldest sister, was queen-regnant; she had both ability and inclination to take the lead. She was short, broad, and dignified, and some years older than either of her sisters. Her father respected her

business-like mind, admired her ambition, regretted sometimes secretly that she had never been able to make up her mind to accept any of the eligible young junior partners, the doctor, the curate, who had severally proposed to her. But then of course, as Anna often said, they could not possibly have got on without her at home. She had been in no hurry to leave the comfortable kingdom where she reigned in undisputed authority, ratifying the decisions of the ministry downstairs, appealed to by the butler, respectfully dreaded by both the housemaids. Who was there to go against her? Mr. Barly was in town all day and left everything to her; Fanny, the second sister, was her faithful ally. Fanny was sprightly, twenty-one, with black eyes and a curl that was much admired. She was fond of fashion, flirting, and finery, inquisitive, talkative, feeble-minded, and entirely devoted to Anna. As for Belle, she had only come back from school the other day. Anna could not quite understand her at times. Fanny was of age and content to do as she was bid; here was Belle at eighteen asserting herself very strangely. Anna and Fanny seemed to pair off somehow, and Belle always had to hold her own without any assistance, unless, indeed, her father was present. He had a great tenderness and affection for his youngest child, and the happiest hour of the day to Belinda was when she heard him come home and call for her in his cheerful quavering voice. By degrees it seemed to her as she listened, that the cheerfulness seemed to be dying away out of his voice, and only the quaver remained; but that may have been fancy and because she had taken a childish dislike to the echoes in the house.

At dinner-time Anna used to ask her father how things were going in the City, and whether shirtings had risen any higher, and at what premium the Tre Rosas shares were held in the market. These were some shares in a Cornish mine company of which Mr. Barly was a director. Anna thought so highly of the whole concern that she had been anxious to invest a portion of her own and her sister Fanny's money in it. They had some small inheritance from their mother, of part of which they had the control when they came of age; the rest was invested in the Funds in Mr. Griffiths' name, and could not be touched. Poor Belle, being a minor, had to be content with sixty pounds a year for her pin-money, which was all she could get for her two thousand pounds.

When Anna talked business Mr. Barly used to be quite dazzled by her practical clear-headedness, her calm foresight and powers of rapid calculation. Fanny used to prick up her ears and ask, shaking her curl playfully, how much girls must have to be heiresses, and did Anna think they should ever be heiresses? Anna would smile and nod her head, in a calm and chastened sort of way, at this childish impatience. "You should be very thankful, Frances, for all you have to look to, and for your excellent prospects. Emily Ogden, with all her fine airs, would not be sorry to be in your place." At which Fanny blushed up bright red, and Belinda jumped impatiently upon her chair, blinking her white eyelids impatiently over her clear grey eyes, as she had a way of doing. "I can't bear talking about

money," said she; "anything is better . . ." Then she too stopped short and blushed.

"Papa," interrupted Fanny playfully, "when will you escort us to the pantomime again? The Ogdens are all going next Tuesday, and you have been most naughty and not taken us anywhere for such a long time."

Mr. Barly, who rarely refused anything anybody asked him, pushed his chair away from the table and answered, with strange impatience for him,—“My dear, I have had no time lately for plays and amusements of any sort. After working from morning to night for you all I am tired, and want a little peace of an evening. I have neither spirits nor——”

“Dear papa,” said Belinda eagerly, “come up into the drawing-room and sit in the easy-chair, and let me play you to sleep.” As she spoke, Belinda smiled a delightful fresh, sweet, tender smile, like sunshine falling on a fair landscape. No wonder the little stockbroker was fond of his youngest daughter. Frances was pouting, Anna frowned slightly as she locked up the wine and turned over in her mind whether she might not write to the Ogdens and ask them to let Frances join their party; as for Belinda, playing Mozart to her father in the dim drawing-room upstairs, she was struck by the worn and harassed look in his face as he slept, snoring gently in accompaniment to her music. It was the last time Belle ever played upon the old piano. Three or four days after the crash came. The great Tre Rosas Mining Company (Limited) had failed, and the old-established house of Barly and Co. unexpectedly stopped payment.

If poor Mr. Barly had done it on purpose, his ruin could not have been more complete and ingenious. When his affairs came to be looked into, and his liabilities had been met, it was found that an immense fortune had been muddled away, and that scarcely anything would be left but a small furnished cottage, which had been given for her life to an old aunt just deceased, and which reverted to Fanny, her godchild, and the small sum which still remained in the three per cents., of which mention has been made, and which could not be touched until Belle, the youngest of three daughters, should come of age.

After two or three miserable days of confusion—during which the machine which had been set going with so much trouble still revolved once or twice with the force of its own impetus, the butler answering the bell, the footman bringing up the coals, the cook sending up the dinner as usual—suddenly everything collapsed, and the great mass of furniture, servants, human creatures, animals, carriages, business and pleasure engagements, seemed overthrown together in a great struggling mass, panting and bewildered and trying to get free from the confusion of particles that no longer belonged to one another.

First, the cook packed up her things and some nice damask tablecloths and napkins, a pair of sheets, and Miss Barly's umbrella, which happened to be hanging in the hall; then the three ladies drove off with their father to the cottage, where it was decided they should go to be out of the way of any unpleasantness. He had no heart to begin again, and was

determined to give up the battle. Belle sat with her father on the back seat of the carriage, looking up into his haggard face a little wistfully, and trying to be as miserable as the others. She could not help it,—a cottage in the country, ruin, roses, novelty, clean chintzes instead of damask, a little room with mignonette, cocks crowing, had a wicked, morbid attraction for her which she could not overcome. She had longed for such a life when she had gone down to stay with the Ogdens at Farmborough last month, and had seen several haystacks and lovely little thatched cottages, where she had felt she would have liked to spend the rest of her days; one in particular had taken her fancy, with dear little latticed windows and a pigeon-cote, and two rosy little babies with a kitten toddling out from the ivy porch; but a great rough-looking man had come up in a slouched wide-awake and frightened Emily Ogden so much that she had pulled Belinda away in a hurry . . . but here a sob from Fanny brought Belle back to her place in the barouche.

Anna felt she must bear up, and nerved herself to the effort. Upon her the blow fell more heavily than upon any of the others. Indignant, injured, angry with her father, furious with the managers, the directors, the shareholders, the secretary, the unfortunate company, with the Bankruptcy Court, the Ogdens, the laws of fate, the world in general, with Fanny for sobbing, and with Belle for looking placid, she sat blankly staring out of window as they drove past the houses where they had visited, and where she had been entertained an honoured guest; and now—she put the hateful thought away—bankrupt, disgraced! Her bonnet was crushed in, she did not say a word, but her face looked quite fierce and old, and frightened Fanny into fresh lamentations. These hysterics had been first brought on by the sight of Emily Ogden driving by in the new barouche. This was quite too much for her poor friend's fortitude. "Emily will drop us, I know she will," sobbed Fanny. "Oh, Anna! will they ever come and ask us to their Thursday luncheon-parties any more?"

"My children," said Mr. Barly, with a placid groan, pulling up the window, "we are disgraced; we can only hide our heads away from the world. Do not expect that any one will ever come near us again." At which announcement Fanny went off into new tears and bewailings. As for the kind, bewildered, weak-headed, soft-hearted little man, he had been so utterly worn out, harassed, worried, and wearied of late, that it was almost a relief to him to think that this was indeed the case. He sat holding Belle's hand in his, stroking and patting it, and wondering that people so near London did not keep the roads in better repair. "We must be getting near our new abode," said he at last almost cheerfully.

"You speak as if you were glad of our shame, papa," said Anna, suddenly, turning round upon him.

"Oh, hush!" cried Belle indignantly. Fortunately the coachman stopped at this moment on a spot a very long way off from Capulet Square; and leaning from his box, asked if it was that there little box across the common.

"Oh, what a sweet little place!" cried Belinda. But her heart rather sank as she told this dreadful story.

Myrtle Cottage was a melancholy little tumbledown place, looking over Dumbleton Common, which they had been crossing all this time. It was covered with stucco, cracked and stained and mouldy. There was a stained-glass window, which was broken. The verandah wanted painting. From outside it was evident that the white muslin curtains were not so fresh as they might have been. There was a little garden in front, planted with durable materials. Even out of doors, in the gardens in the suburbs, the box-edges, the laurel-bushes, and the fusty old jessamines are apt to look shabby in time, if they are never renewed. A certain amount of time and money might, perhaps, have made Myrtle Cottage into a pleasant little habitation; but (judging from appearances) its last inhabitants seemed to have been in some want of both these commodities. Its helpless new occupants were not likely to have much of either to spare. A little dining-room, with glass drop candlesticks and a rickety table, and a print of a church and a Dissenting minister on the wall. A little drawing-room, with a great horsehair sofa, a huge round table in the middle of the room, and more glass drop candlesticks, also a small work-table of glass over faded worsted embroidery. Four little bedrooms, mousey, musty, snuffy, with four-posts as terrific as any they had left behind, and a small black dungeon for a maid-servant. This was the little paradise which Belle had been picturing to herself all along the road, and at which she looked round half sighing, half dismayed. Their bundles, baskets, blankets, were handed in, and a cart full of boxes had arrived. Fanny's parrot was shrieking at the top of its voice on the narrow landing.

"What fun!" cried Belinda sturdily, instantly setting to work to get things into some order, while Fanny lay exhausted upon the horsehair sofa; and Anna, in her haughtiest tones, desired the coachman to drive home, and stood watching the receding carriage until it had dwindled away, into the distance—coachman, hammer-cloth, bay horses, respectability, and all. When she re-entered the house, the parrot was screeching still, and Martha, the under-housemaid—now transformed into a sort of extract of butler, footman, ladies'-maid, and cook—was frying some sausages, of which the vulgar smell pervaded the place.

III.

BELLE exclaimed, but it required all her courage and natural brightness of spirit to go on looking at the bright side of things, praising the cottage, working in the garden, giving secret assistance to the two bewildered maids who waited on the reduced little family, cheering her father, smiling, and putting the best face on things, as her sisters used to do at home. If it had been all front stairs in Capulet Square, it was all back staircase at the cottage. Rural roses, calm sunsets, long shadows across the common are all very well; but when puffs of smoke come out of the

chimney and fill the little place ; when, if the window is opened, a rush of wind and dust—worse almost than the smoke—comes eddying into the room, and careers round the four narrow walls ; when poor little Fanny coughs and shudders, and wraps her shawl more closely round her with a groan ; when the smell of the kitchen frying-pan perfumes the house, and a mouse scampers out of the cupboard, and blackbeetles lie struggling in the milk-jugs, and the pump runs dry, and spiders crawl out of the tea-caddy, and so forth ; then, indeed, Belle deserves some credit for being cheerful under difficulties. She could not pretend to very high spirits, but she was brisk and willing, and ready to smile at her father's little occasional puns and feeble attempts at jocularity. Anna, who had been so admirable as a general, broke down under the fatigue of the actual labour in the trenches which belonged to their new life. A great many people can order others about very brilliantly and satisfactorily, who fail when they have to do the work themselves.

Some of the neighbours called upon them, but the Ogdens never appeared. Poor little Fanny used to take her lace-work and sit stitching and looping her thread at the window which overlooked the common and its broad roads, crossing and recrossing the plain ; carriages came rolling along, people came walking, children ran past the windows of the little cottage, but the Ogdens never. Once Fanny thought she recognized the barouche—Lady Ogden and Emily sitting in front, Matthew Ogden on the back seat ; surely, yes, surely it was him. But the carriage rolled off in a cloud of dust, and disappeared behind the wall of the neighbouring park ; and Frances finished the loop, and passed her needle in and out of the muslin, feeling as if it was through her poor little heart that she was piercing and sticking ; she pulled out a long thread, and it seemed to her as if the sunset stained it red like blood.

In the meanwhile Belle's voice had been singing away overhead, and Fanny, going upstairs presently, found her, with one of the maids, clearing out one of the upper rooms. The window was open, the furniture was piled up in the middle. Belle, with her sleeves tucked up and her dress carefully pinned out of the dust, was standing on a chair, hammer in hand, and fixing up some dimity curtains against the window. Tablecloths, brooms, pails, and brushes were lying about, and everything looked in perfect confusion. As Fanny stood looking and exclaiming, Anna also came to the door from her own room, where she had been taking a melancholy nap.

"What a mess you are making here," cried the elder sister, very angrily. How can you take up Martha's time, Belinda ? And oh ! how can you forget yourself to this degree ? You seem to *exult* in your father's disgrace." Belinda flushed up.

"Really, Anna, I do not know what you mean," said she, turning round, vexed for a minute, and clasping a long curtain in both arms. "I could not bear to see my father's room looking so shabby and neglected ; there is no disgrace in attending to his comfort. See, we have taken

down those dusty curtains, and we are going to put up some others," said the girl, springing down from the chair and exhibiting her treasures.

"And pray where is the money to come from," said Anna, "to pay for these wonderful changes?"

"They cost no money," said Belinda, laughing. "I made them myself with my own two hands. Don't you remember my old white dress that you never liked, Anna? Look how I have pricked my finger. Now, go down," said the girl, in her pretty imperative way, "and don't come up again till I call you."

Go down at Belle's bidding.

Anna went off fuming, and immediately set to work also, but in a different fashion. She unfortunately found that her father had returned, and was sitting in the little sitting-room down below by himself, with a limp paper of the day before open upon his knees. He was not reading. He seemed out of spirits, and was gazing in a melancholy way at the smouldering fire, and rubbing his bald head in a perplexed and troubled manner. Seeing this, the silly woman, by way of cheering and comforting the poor old man, began to exclaim at Belinda's behaviour, to irritate him, and overwhelm him with allusions and reproaches.

"Scrubbing and slaving with her own hands," said Anna. "Forgetting herself; bringing us down lower indeed than we are already sunk. Papa, she will not listen to me. You should tell her that you forbid her to put us all to shame by her behaviour."

When Belle, panting, weary, triumphant, and with a blackened nose and rosy cheek, opened the door of the room presently and called her father exultingly, she did not notice, as she ran upstairs before him, how wearily he followed her. A flood of light came from the dreary little room overhead. It had been transformed into a bower of white dimity, bright windows, clean muslin blinds. The fusty old carpet was gone, and a clean crumb-cloth had been put down, with a comfortable rug before the fireplace. A nosegay of jessamine stood on the chimney, and at each corner of the four-post bed the absurd young decorator had stuck a smart bow, made out of some of her own blue ribbons, in place of the terrible plumes and tassels which had waved there in dust and darkness before. One of the two arm-chairs which blocked up the wall of the dining-room had been also covered out of some of Belinda's stores, and stood comfortably near the open window. The sun was setting over the great common outside, behind the mill and the distant fringe of elm-trees. Martha, standing all illuminated by the sunshine, with her mop in her hand, was grinning from ear to ear, and Belle turned and rushed into her father's arms. But Mr. Barly was quite overcome. "My child," he said, "why do you trouble yourself so much for me? Your sister has told me all. I don't deserve it. I cannot bear that you should be brought to this. My Belle working and slaving with your own hands through my fault—through my fault." The old man sat down on the side of the bed by which he had been standing, and laid his face in his hands, in a perfect agony of remorse

and regret. Belinda was dismayed by the result of her labours. In vain she tried to cheer him and comfort him. The sweeter she seemed in his eyes, the more miserable the poor father grew at the condition to which he had brought her.

For many days after he went about in a sort of despair, thinking what he could do to retrieve his ruined fortunes, and if Belinda still rose betimes to see to his comfort and the better ordering of the confused little household, she took care not to let it be known. Anna came down at nine, Fanny at ten. Anna would then spend several hours regretting her former dignities, reading the newspaper and the fashionable intelligence, while the dismal strains of Fanny's piano (there was a jangling piano in the little drawing-room,) streamed across the common. To a stormy spring, with wind flying, and dust dashing against the window-panes, and grey clouds swiftly bearing across the wide open country, had succeeded a warm and brilliant summer, with sunshine flooding and spreading over the country. Anna and Fanny were able to get out a little now, but they were soon tired, and would sit down under a tree and remark to one another how greatly they missed their accustomed drives. Belinda, who had sometimes at first disappeared now and then to cry mysteriously a little bit by herself over her troubles, now discovered that at eighteen, with good health and plenty to do, happiness is possible, even without a carriage.

One day Mr. Barly, who still went into the City from habit, came home with some news which had greatly excited him. Wheal Tre Rosas, of which he still held a great many shares, which he had never been able to dispose of, had been giving some signs of life. A fresh call was to be made: some capitalist, with more money than he evidently knew what to do with, had been buying up a great deal of the stock. The works were to be resumed. Mr. Barly had always been satisfied that the concern was a good one. He would give everything he had, he told Anna that evening, to be able to raise enough money now to buy up more of the shares. His fortune was made if he could do so; his children replaced in their proper position, and his name restored. Anna was in a state of greater flutter, if possible, than her father himself. Belle sighed; she could not help feeling doubtful, but she did not like to say much on the subject.

"Papa, this Wheal has proved a very treacherous wheel of fortune to us," she hazarded, blushing, and bending over her sewing; "we are very, very happy as we are."

"Happy?" said Anna with a sneer.

"Really, Belinda, you are too romantic," said Fanny, with a titter; while Mr. Barly cried out, in an excited way, "that she should be happier yet, and all her goodness and dutifulness should be rewarded in time." A sort of presentiment of evil came over Belinda, and her eyes filled up with tears; but she stitched them away and said no more.

Unfortunately the only money Mr. Barly could think of to lay his hands upon was that sum in the three per cents. upon which they were now living; and even if he chose he could not touch any of it, until Belinda

came of age ; unless, indeed, young Mr. Griffiths would give him permission to do so.

"Go to him, papa," cried Anna, enthusiastically. "Go to him ; entreat, insist upon it, if necessary."

All that evening Anna and Frances talked over their brilliant prospects. "I should like to see the Ogdens again," said poor little Fanny. "Perhaps we shall if we go back to Capulet Square." "Certainly, certainly," said Anna. "I have heard that this Mr. Griffiths is a most uncouth and uncivilized person to deal with," continued Miss Barly, with her finger on her chin. "Papa, wouldn't it be better for me to go to Mr. Griffiths instead of you ?" This, however, Mr. Barly would not consent to.

Anna could hardly contain her vexation and spite when he came back next day dispirited, crestfallen, and utterly wretched and disappointed. Mr. Griffiths would have nothing to say to it.

"What's the good of a trustee," said he to Mr. Barly, "if he were to let you invest your money in such a speculative chance as that. Take my advice, and sell out your shares now if you can for anything you can get."

"A surly, disagreeable fellow," said poor old Mr. Barly. "I heartily wish he had nothing to do with our affairs."

Anna fairly stamped with rage. "What insolence, when it is our own. Papa, you have no spirit to allow such interference."

Mr. Barly looked at her gravely, and said he should not allow it. Anna did not know what he meant.

Belinda was not easy about her father all this time. He came and went in an odd excited sort of way, stopping short sometimes as he was walking across the room, and standing absorbed in thought. One day he went into the City unexpectedly about the middle of the day, and came back looking quite odd, pale, with curious eyes ; something was wrong, she could not tell what. In the meantime Wheel Tre Rosas seemed, spite of Mr. Griffiths' prophecies, to be steadily rising in the world. More business had been done, the shares were a trifle higher. A meeting of directors was convened, and actually a small dividend was declared at Midsummer. It really seemed as if there was some chance after all that Anna should be reinstated in the barouche, in Capulet Square, and her place in society. She and Fanny were half wild with delight. "When we leave,"—was the beginning of every sentence they uttered. Fanny wrote the good news to her friend Miss Ogden, and, under these circumstances, to Fanny's unfeigned delight, Emily Ogden thought herself justified in driving over to the village one fine afternoon and affably partaking of a cracked cupful of five-o'clock tea. It was slightly smoked, and the milk was turned. Belinda had gone out for a walk and was not there to see to it all ; I am afraid she did not quite forgive Emily the part she had played, and could not make up her mind to meet her.

One morning Anna was much excited by the arrival of a letter directed to Mr. Barly in great round handwriting, and with a huge seal, all over bears and griffins. Her father was for ever expecting news of his beloved Tre

Rosas, and he broke the seal with some curiosity. But this was only an invitation to dine and sleep at Castle Gardens from Mr. Griffiths, who said he had an offer to make Mr. Barly, and concluded by saying that he hoped Mr. Barly forgave him for the ungracious part he had been obliged to play the other day, and that, in like circumstances, he would do the same by him.

"I shan't go," said Mr. Barly, a little doggedly, putting the letter down.

"Not go, papa! Why, you may be able to talk him over if you get him quietly to yourself. Certainly you must go, papa," said Anna. "Oh! I'm sure he means to relent—how nice!" said Fanny. Even Belinda thought it was a pity he should not accept the invitation, and Mr. Barly gave way as usual. He asked them if they had any commands for him in town.

"Oh, thank you, papa," said Frances. "If you are going shopping, I wish you would bring me back a blue alpaca, and a white grenadine, and a pink sou-pout, and a——"

"My dear Fanny, that will be quite sufficient for the short time you remain here," interrupted Anna, who went on to give her father several commissions of her own—some writing-paper stamped with Barly Lodge and their crest in one corner; a jacket with buttons for the knife-boy they had lately engaged upon the strength of their coming good fortune; a new umbrella, house-agent's list of mansions in the neighbourhood of Capulet Square, the *Journal des Modes*, and the *New Court Guide*. "Let me see, there was something else," said Anna.

"Belle," said Mr. Barly, "how comes it you ask for nothing? What can I bring you, my child?"

Belle looked up with one of her bright melancholy smiles and replied, "If you should see any roses, papa, I think I should like a bunch of roses. We have none in the garden."

"Roses!" cried Fanny, laughing. "I didn't know you cared for anything but what was useful, Belle."

"I quite expected you would ask for a saucepan, or a mustard-pot," said Anna, with a sneer.

Belle sighed again, and then the three went and stood at the garden-gate to see their father off. It made a pretty little group for the geese on the common to contemplate,—the two young sisters at the wicket, the elder under the shade of the verandah, Belle upright, smiling, waving her slim hand; she was above the middle height, she had fair hair and dark eyebrows and grey eyes, over which she had a peculiar way of blinking her smooth white eyelids;—and all about, the birds, the soft winds, the great green common with its gorgeous furze-blossom blazing against the low bank of clouds in the horizon. Close at hand a white pony was tranquilly cropping the grass, and two little village children were standing outside the railings, gazing up open-mouthed at the pretty ladies who lived at the cottage.

IV.

THE clouds which had been gathering all the afternoon broke shortly before Mr. Barly reached his entertainer's house. He had tried to get there through Kensington Gardens, but could not make out the way, and went wandering round and round in some perplexity under the great trees with their creaking branches. The storm did not last long and the clouds dispersed at sunset. When Mr. Barly rang at the gate of the villa in Castle Gardens at last that evening he was weary, wet through, and far less triumphant than he had been when he left home in the morning. The butler who let him in gave the bag which he had been carrying to the footman and showed him the way upstairs immediately, to the comfortable room which had been made ready for him. Upholsterers had done the work on the whole better than Belle with all her loving labour. The chairs were softer than her print-covered horsehair cushions. The wax-lights were burning although it was broad daylight. Mr. Barly went to the bay-window. The garden outside was a sight to see: smooth lawns, arches, roses in profusion and abundance, hanging and climbing and clustering everywhere, a distant gleam of a fountain, of a golden sky, a chirruping and rustling in the bushes and trellises after the storm. The sunset which was lighting up the fern on the rain-sprinkled common was twinkling through the rose-petals here, bringing out odours and aromas and whiffs of delicious scent. Mr. Barly thought of Belle, and how he should like to see her flitting about in the garden and picking roses to her heart's content. As he stood there he thought too with a pang of his wife whom he had lost, and sighed in a sort of despair at the troubles which had fallen upon him of late; what would he not give to undo the work of the last few months, he thought—nay, of the last few days? He had once come to this very house with his wife in their early days of marriage. He remembered it now, although he had not thought of it before.

Sometimes it happens to us all that things which happened ever so long ago seem to make a start out of their proper places in the course of time, and come after us, until they catch us up, as it were, and surround us, so that one can hear the voices, and see the faces and colours, and feel the old sensations and thrills as keenly as at the time they occurred—all so curiously and strangely vivid that one can scarcely conceive it possible that years and years perhaps have passed since it all happened, and that their present shock proceeds from ancient and almost forgotten impulse. And so as Mr. Barly looked and remembered and thought of the past, a sudden remorse and shame came over him. He seemed to see his wife standing in the garden, holding the roses up over her head, looking like Belle; like, yet unlike. Why it should have been so, at the thought of his wife among the flowers, I cannot tell; but as he remembered her he began to think of what he had done,—that he was there in the house of the man he had defrauded,—he began to ask himself how could he face him? how could he sit down beside him at table, and break his bread? The

poor old fellow fell back with a groan in one of the comfortable arm-chairs. Should he confess? Oh, no—no, that would be the most terrible of all!

What he had done is simply told. When Guy Griffiths refused to let Mr. Barly lay hands on any of the money which he had in trust for his daughters, the foolish and angry old man had sold out a portion of the sum belonging to Mr. Griffiths which still remained in his own name. It had not seemed like dishonesty at the time, but now he would have gladly,—oh, how gladly! awakened to find it all a dream. He dressed mechanically, turning over every possible chance in his own mind. Let Wheal Tre Rosas go on and prosper, the first money should go to repay his loan, and no one would be the wiser. He went down into the library again when he was ready. It was empty still, and, to his relief, the master of the house had not yet come back. He waited a very long time, looking at the clock, at the reviews on the table, at the picture of Mrs. Griffiths, whom he could remember in her youth, upon the wall. The butler came in again to say that his master had not yet returned. Some message had come by a boy, which was not very intelligible,—he had been detained in the City. Mrs. Griffiths was not well enough to leave her room, but she hoped Mr. Barly would order dinner,—anything he required,—and that her son would shortly return.

It was very late. There was nothing else to be done. Mr. Barly found a fire lighted in the great dining-room, dinner laid, one plate and one knife and fork, at the end of the long table. The dinner was excellent, so was the wine. The butler uncorked a bottle of champagne, the cook sent up chickens and all sorts of good things. Mr. Barly almost felt as if he, by some strange metempsychosis, had been converted into the owner of this handsome dwelling, and all that belonged to it. At twelve o'clock Mr. Griffiths had not yet returned, and his guest, after a somewhat perplexed and solitary meal, retired to rest.

Mr. Barly breakfasted by himself again next morning. Mr. Griffiths had not returned all night. In his secret heart Mr. Griffiths' guest was almost relieved by the absence of his entertainer: it seemed like a respite. Perhaps, after all, everything would go well, and the confession which he had contemplated with such terror the night before need never be made. For the present it was clearly no use to wait any longer at the house. Mr. Barly asked for a cab to take him to the station, left his compliments and regrets and a small sum of money behind him, and then, as the cab delayed, strolled out into the front garden to wait for it.

Even in the front court the roses were all abloom; a great snow cluster was growing over the doorway, a pretty tea-rose was hanging its head over the scraper; against the outer railing which separated the house from the road rose-trees had been planted. The beautiful pink fragrant heads were pushing through the iron railings, and a delicious little rose-wind came blowing in the poor old fellow's face. He began to think—no wonder—of Belle and her fancy for roses, and mechanically, without much reflecting upon what he was about, he stopped and inhaled the ravishing

sweet smell of the great dewy flowers, and then put out his hand and gathered one; and as he gathered it, a sharp thorn ran into his finger, and a heavy grasp was laid upon his shoulder.

"So it is you, is it, who sneak in and steal my roses?" said an angry voice. "Now that I know who it is, I shall give you in charge."

Mr. Barly looked round greatly startled. He met the fierce glare of two dark brown eyes under shaggy brows, that were frowning very fiercely. A broad, thick-set, round-shouldered young man of forbidding aspect had laid hold of him. The young man let go his grasp when he saw the mistake he had made, but did not cease frowning.

"Oh! it is you, Mr. Barly," he said.

"I was just going," said the stockbroker, meekly. "I am glad you have returned in time for me to see you, Mr. Griffiths. I am sorry I took your rose. My youngest daughter is fond of them, and I thought I might, out of all this garden-full, you would not—she had asked—"

There was something so stern and unforgiving in Mr. Griffiths' face that the merchant stumbled in his words, and stopped short surprised, in the midst of his explanations.

"The roses were not yours, not if there were ten gardens full. I won't have my roses broken off," said Griffiths; "they should be cut with a knife. Come back with me; I want to have a little talk with you, Mr. Barly."

Somehow the old fellow's heart began to beat, and he felt himself turn rather sick.

"I was detained last night by some trouble in my office. One of my clerks, in whom I thought I could have trusted, absconded yesterday afternoon. I have been all the way to Liverpool in pursuit of him. What do you think should be done with him?" And Mr. Griffiths, from under his thick eyebrows, gave a quick glance at his present victim, and seemed to expect some sort of answer.

"You prosperous men cannot realize what it is to be greatly tempted," said Mr. Barly, with a faint smile.

"Do you know that Wheal Tre Rosas has come to grief a second time?" said young Mr. Griffiths abruptly, holding out the morning's *Times*, as they walked along. "I am not a prosperous man; I had a great many shares in that unlucky concern."

Poor Barly stopped short and turned quite pale and began to shake so that he had to put his hand out and lean against the wall. Failed! Was he doomed to misfortune? Then there was never any chance for him,—never. No hope! No hope of paying back the debt which weighed upon his conscience. He could not realize it. Failed! The rose had fallen to the ground;—the poor unlucky man stood still, staring blankly in the other's grim, unrelenting face. "I am ruined," he said.

"You are ruined! Is that the worst you have to tell me?" said Mr. Griffiths, still looking piercingly at him. Then the other felt that he knew all.

"I have been very unfortunate—and very much to blame," said

Mr. Barly, still trembling ;—"terribly to blame,—Mr. Griffiths. I can only throw myself upon your clemency."

"My clemency! my mercy! I am no philanthropist," said Guy, savagely. "I am a man of business, and you have defrauded me!"

"Sir," said the stockbroker, finding some odd comfort in braving the worst, "you refused to let me take what was my own ;—I have sold out some of your money to invest in this fatal concern. Heaven knows it was not for myself, but for the sake of—of—others ; and I thought to repay you ere long. You can repay yourself now. You need not reproach me any more. You can send me to prison if you like. I—I—don't much care what happens. My Belle, my poor Belle,—my poor girls!"

All this time Guy said never a word. He motioned Mr. Barly to follow him into the library. Mr. Barly obeyed, and stood meekly waiting for the coming onslaught. He stood in the full glare of the morning sun, which was pouring through the unblinded window. His poor old scanty head was bent, and his hair stood on end in the sunshine.

His eyes, avoiding the glare, went vacantly travelling along the scroll-work on the fender, and so to the coal-scuttle and to the skirting on the wall, and back again. Dishonoured,—yes. Bankrupt,—yes. Three-score years had brought him to this,—to shame, to trouble. It was a hard world for unlucky people, but Mr. Barly was too much broken, too weary and indifferent, to feel very bitterly even against the world. Meanwhile Guy was going on with his reflections, and like those amongst us who are still young and strong, he could put more life and energy into his condemnation and judgment of actions done, than the unlucky perpetrators had to give to the very deeds themselves. Some folks do wrong as well as right, with scarcely more than half a mind to it.

"How could you do such a thing?" cried the young man indignantly, beginning to rush up and down the room in his hasty, clumsy way, knocking against tables and chairs as he went along. "How could you do it?" he repeated. "I learnt it yesterday by chance. What can I say to you that your own conscience should not have told you already? How could you do it?" Guy had reached the great end window, and stamped with vexation and a mixture of anger and sorrow. For all his fierceness and gruffness, he was sorry for the poor feeble old man whose fate he held in his hand. There was the garden outside, and its treasure and glory of roses ; there was the rose, lying on the ground, that old Barly had taken. It was lying broken and shining upon the gravel—one rose out of the hundreds that were bursting, and blooming, and fainting and falling on their spreading stems. It was like the wrong old Barly had done his kinsman—one little wrong Guy thought, one little handful out of all his abundance. He looked back, and by chance caught sight of their two figures reflected in the glass at the other end of the room,—his own image, the strong, round-backed, broad-shouldered young man, with gleaming white teeth and black bristling hair ; the feeble and uncertain culprit, with his broken wandering looks, waiting his sentence. It was not Guy who

delivered it. It came—no very terrible one after all—prompted by some unaccountable secret voice and impulse. Have we not all of us sometimes suddenly felt ashamed in our lives in the face of misfortune and sorrow? Are we Pharisees, standing in the market-place, with our phylacteries displayed to the world? We ask ourselves, in dismay, does this man go home justified rather than we? Guy was not the less worthy of his Belinda, poor fellow, because a thought of her crossed his mind, and because he blushed up, and a gentle look came into his eyes, and a shame into his heart—a shame of his strength and prosperousness, of his probity and high honour. When had he been tempted? What was it but a chance that he had been born what he was? And yet old Barly, in all his troubles, had a treasure in his possession for which Guy felt he would give all his good fortune and good repute, his roses—red, white, and golden—his best heart's devotion, which he secretly felt to be worth all the rest. Now was the time, the young man thought, to make that proposition which he had in his mind.

"Look here," said Guy, hanging his great shaggy head, and speaking quickly and thickly, as if he was the culprit instead of the accuser. "You imply it was for your daughter's sake that you cheated me. I cannot consent to act as you would have me do, and take your daughter's money to pay myself back. But if one of them,—Miss Belinda, since she likes roses,—chooses to come here and work the debt off, she can do so. My mother is in bad health and wants a companion; she will engage her at—let me see, a hundred guineas a year, and in this way, by degrees, the debt will be cleared off."

"In twenty years," said Mr. Barly, bewildered, relieved, astonished.

"Yes, in twenty years," said Guy, as if that was the most natural thing in the world. "Go home and consult her, and come back and give me the answer."

And as he spoke, the butler came in to say that the hansom was at the door.

Poor old Barly bent his worn meek head and went out. He was shaken and utterly puzzled. If Guy had told him to climb up the chimney he would have obeyed. He could only do as he was bid. As it was, he clambered with difficulty into the hansom, told the man to go to the station for Dumbleton, and he was driving off gladly when some one called after the cab. The old man peered out anxiously. Had Griffiths changed his mind? Was his heart hardened like Pharaoh's at the eleventh hour?

It was certainly Guy who came hastily after the cab, looking more awkward and sulky than ever. "Hoy! Stop! You have forgotten the roses for your daughter," said he, thrusting in a great bunch of sweet foam and freshness. As the cab drove along, people passing by looked up and envied the man who was carrying such loveliness through the black and dreary London streets. Could they have seen the face looking out behind the roses they might have ceased to envy.

Belle was on the watch for her father at the garden-gate, and exclaimed with delight, as she saw him toiling up the hill from the station with his huge bunch of flowers. She came running to meet him with fluttering skirts and outstretched hands, and sweet smiles gladdening her face. "Oh, papa, how lovely! Have you had a pleasant time?" Her father hardly responded. "Take the roses, Belle," he said. "I have paid for them dearly enough." He went into the house wearily, and sat down in the shabby arm-chair. And then he turned and called Belinda to him wistfully and put his trembling arm round about her. Poor old Barly was no mighty Jephthah; but his feeble old head bent with some such pathetic longing and remorse over his Belle as he drew her to him, and told her, in a few simple broken words, all the story of what had befallen him in those few hours since he went away. He could not part from her. "I can't, I can't," he said, as the girl put her tender arms round his neck. . . .

Guy came to see me a few days after his interview with old Mr. Barly, and told me that his mother had surprised him by her willing acquiescence in the scheme. I could have explained matters to him a little, but I thought it best to say nothing. Mrs. Griffiths had overheard, and understood a word or two of what he had said to me that night, when she was taken ill. Was it some sudden remorse for the past? was it a new-born mother's tenderness stirring in her cold heart, which made her question and cross-question me the next time that I was alone with her? There had often been a talk of some companion or better sort of attendant. When the news came of poor old Barly's failure, it was Mrs. Griffiths herself who first vaguely alluded again to this scheme.

"I might engage one of those girls—the—the—Belinda, I think you called her?"

I was touched, and took her cold hand and kissed it.

"I am sure she would be an immense comfort to you," I said. "You would never regret your kindness."

The sick woman sighed and turned away impatiently, and the result was the invitation to dinner, which turned out so disastrously.

V.

WHEN Mr. Barly came down to breakfast the morning after his return he found another of those great square official-looking letters upon the table. There was a cheque in it for 100*l*. "You will have to meet heavy expenses," the young man wrote. "I am not sorry to have an opportunity of proving to you that it was not the money which you have taken from me I grudged, but the manner in which you took it. The only reparation you can make me is by keeping the enclosed for your present necessity."

In truth the family prospects were not very brilliant. Myrtle Cottage was resplendent with clean windows and well-scrubbed door-steps, but the

furniture wanted repairing, the larder refilling. Belle could not darn up the broken flap of the dining-room table, nor conjure legs of mutton out of bare bones, though she got up ever so early; sweeping would not mend the hole in the carpet, nor could she dust the mildew-stains off the walls, the cracks out of the looking-glass.

Anna was morose, helpless, and jealous of the younger girl's influence over her father. Fanny was delicate; one gleam of happiness, however, streaked her horizon: Emily Ogden had written to invite her to spend a few days there. When Mr. Barly and his daughter had talked over Mr. Griffiths' proposition, Belle's own good sense told her that it would be folly to throw away this good chance. Let Mrs. Griffiths be ever so trying and difficult to deal with, and her son a thousand times sterner and ruder than he had already shown himself, she was determined to bear it all. Belinda knew her own powers, and felt as if she could endure anything, and that she should never forget the generosity and forbearance he had shown her poor father. Anna was delighted that her sister should go; she threw off the shawl in which she had muffled herself up ever since their reverses, brightened up wonderfully, talked mysteriously of Fanny's prospects as she helped both the girls to pack, made believe to shed a few tears as Belinda set off, and bustled back into the house with renewed importance. Belinda looked back and waved her hand, but Anna's back was already turned upon her.

Poor Belinda! For all her courage and cheerfulness her heart sank a little as they reached the great bronze gates in Castle Gardens. She would have been more unhappy still if she had not had to keep up her father's spirits. It was almost dinner-time, and Mrs. Griffiths' maid came down with a message. Her mistress was tired, and just going to bed, and would see her in the morning; Mr. Griffiths was dining in town; Miss Williamson would call upon Miss Barly that evening.

Dinner had been laid as usual in the great dining-room, with its marble columns and draperies, and Dutch pictures of game and of birds and flowers. Three servants were in waiting, a great silver chandelier lighted the dismal meal, huge dish-covers were upheaved, decanters of wine were handed round, all the *entrées* and delicacies came over again. Belle tried to eat to keep her father in company. She even made little jokes, and whispered to him that they evidently meant to fatten her up. The poor old fellow cheered up by degrees; the good claret warmed his feeble pulse, the good fare comforted and strengthened him. "I wish Martha would make us ice puddings," said Belle, helping him to a glittering mass of pale-coloured cream, with nutmeg and vanilla, and all sorts of delicious spices. He had just finished the last mouthful when the butler started and rushed out of the room, a door banged, a bell rang violently, a loud scraping was heard in the hall, and an echoing voice said, "Are they come? Are they in the dining-room?" And the crimson curtain was lifted up, and the master of the house entered the room carrying a bag and a great-coat over his arm. As he passed the sideboard

the button of the coat caught in the fringe of a cloth which was spread upon it, and in a minute the cloth and all the glasses and plates which had been left there came to the ground with a wild crash, which would have made Belle laugh, if she had not been too nervous even to smile.

Guy merely told the servants to pick it all up, and put down the things he was carrying and walked straight across the room to the two frightened people at the far end of the table. Poor fellow! After shaking hands with old Barly and giving Belle an abrupt little nod, all he could find to say was,—

"I hope you came of your own free will, Miss Barly?" and as he spoke he gave a shy scowl and eyed her all over.

"Yes," Belle answered, blinking her soft eyes to see him more clearly.

"Then I'm very much obliged to you," said Guy.

This was such an astonishingly civil answer that Belinda's courage rose.

Poor Belinda's heart failed her again when Griffiths, still in an agony of shyness, then turned to her father, and in his roughest voice said,—

"You leave early in the morning, but I hope we shall keep your daughter for a very long time."

Poor fellow! he meant no harm and only intended this by way of conversation. Belle in her secret heart said to herself that he was a cruel brute; and poor Guy, having made this impression, broken a dozen wine-glasses, and gone through untold struggles of shyness, now wished them both good-night.

"Good-night, Mr. Barly; good-night, Miss Belle," said he. Something in his voice caused Belle to relent a little.

"Good-night, Mr. Griffiths," said the girl, standing up, a slight graceful figure, simple and nymph-like, amidst all this pomp of circumstance. As Griffiths shuffled out of the room he saw her still; all night he saw her in his dreams. That bright winsome young creature dressed in white soft folds, with all the gorgeous gildings and draperies, and the lights burning, and the pictures and gold cups glimmering round about her. They were his, and as many more of them as he chose: the inanimate, costly, sickening pomps and possessions; but a pure spirit like that, to be a bright living companion for him? Ah, no! that was not to be—not for him, not for such as him. Guy, for the first time in his life, as he went downstairs next morning, stopped and looked at himself attentively in the great glass on the staircase. He saw a great loutish, round-backed fellow, with a shaggy head and brown glittering eyes, and little strong white teeth like a dog's; he gave an uncouth sudden caper of rage and regret at his own appearance. "To think that happiness and life itself and love eternal depend upon tailors and hair-oil," groaned poor Guy, as he went down to his room to write letters.

Mrs. Griffiths had not seen Belle the night before; she was always nervously averse to seeing strangers, but she had sent for me that evening, and as I was leaving she asked me to go down and speak to Miss Barly

before I went. Belinda was already in her room, but I ventured to knock at the door. She came to meet me with a bright puzzled face and all her pretty hair falling loose about her face. She had not a notion who I was, but begged me to come in. When I had explained things a little, she pulled out a chair for me to sit down.

"This house seems to me so mysterious and unlike anything else I have ever known," said she, "that I'm very grateful to any one who will tell me what I'm to do here—please sit down a little while."

I told her that she would have to write notes, to add up bills, to read to Mrs. Griffiths, and to come to me whenever she wanted any help or comfort. "You were quite right to come," said I. "They are excellent people. Guy is the kindest, best fellow in the whole world, and I have long heard of you, Miss Barly, and I'm sure such a good daughter as you have been will be rewarded some day."

Belle looked puzzled, grateful, a little proud, and very charming. She told me afterwards that it had been a great comfort to her father to hear of my little visit to her, and that she had succeeded in getting him away without any very painful scene.

Poor Belle! I wonder how many tears she shed that day after her father was gone? While she was waiting to be let in to Mrs. Griffiths she amused herself by wandering about the house, dropping a little tear here and there as she went along, and trying to think that it amused her to see so many yards of damask and stair-carpeting, all exactly alike, so many acres of chintz of the same pattern.

"Mr. Griffiths desired me to say that this tower room was to be made ready for you to sit in, ma'am," said the respectful butler, meeting her and opening a door. "It has not been used before." And he gave her the key, to which a label was affixed, with "MISS BARLY'S ROOM" written upon it, in the housekeeper's scrawling handwriting.

Belle gave a little shriek of admiration. It was a square room, with four windows, overlooking the gardens, the distant park, and the broad cheerful road which ran past the house. An ivy screen had been trained over one of the windows, roses were clustering in garlands round the deep sill casements. There was an Indian carpet, and pretty silk curtains, and comfortable chintz chairs and sofas, upon which beautiful birds were flying and lilies wreathing. There was an old-fashioned-looking piano too, and a great book-case filled with books and music. "They certainly treat me in the most magnificent way," thought Belle, sinking down upon the sofa in the window which overlooked the rose-garden, and inhaling a delicious breath of fragrant air. "They can't mean to be very unkind." Belle, who was a little curious, it must be confessed, looked at everything, made secret notes in her mind, read the titles of the books, examined the china, discovered a balcony to her turret. There was a little writing-table, too, with paper and pens and inks of various colours, which especially pleased her. A glass cup of cut roses had been placed upon it, and two dear little green books, in one of which some one had left a paper-cutter.

The first was a book of fairy tales, from which I hope the good fairy editress will forgive me for stealing a sentence or two.

The other little green book was called the *Golden Treasury*; and when Belle took it up, it opened where the paper-cutter had been left, at the seventh page, and some one had scored the sonnet there. Belle read it, and somehow, as she read, the tears in her eyes started afresh.

Being your slave, what should I do but tend
Upon the hours and times of your desire ?

it began. "To—" had been scrawled underneath; and then the letter following the "To" erased. Belle blinked her eyes over it, but could make nothing out. A little further on she found another scoring—

O, my love's like a red, red rose,
That's newly sprung in June!
O, my love's like the melody,
That's sweetly played in tune!

and this was signed with a G.

"Love! That is not for me; but I wish I had a slave," thought poor Belle, hanging her head over the book as it lay open in her lap, "and that he was clever enough to tell me what my father is doing at this minute." She could imagine it for herself, alas! without any magic interference. She could see the dreary little cottage, her poor old father wearily returning alone. She nearly broke down at the thought, but some one knocked at the door at that instant, and she forced herself to be calm as one of the servants came in with a telegram. Belinda tore open her telegram in some alarm and trembling terror of bad news from home; and then smiled a sweet loving smile of relief. The telegram came from Guy. It was dated from his office. "Your father desires me to send word that he is safe home. He sends his love. I have been to D. on business, and travelled down with him."

Belinda could not help saying to herself that Mr. Griffiths was very kind to have thought of her. His kindness gave her courage to meet his mother.

It was not very much that she had to do; but whatever it was she accomplished well and thoroughly, as was her way. Whatever the girl put her hand to she put her whole heart to at the same time. Her energy, sweetness, and good spirits cheered the sick woman and did her infinite good. Mrs. Griffiths took a great fancy to her, and liked to have her about her. Belle lunched with her the first day. She had better dine down below, Mrs. Griffiths said; and when dinner-time came the girl dressed herself, smoothed her yellow curls, and went shyly down the great staircase into the dining-room. It must be confessed that she glanced a little curiously at the table, wondering whether she was to dine alone or in company. This problem was soon solved; a side-door burst open, and Guy made his appearance, looking shy and ashamed of it as he came up and shook hands with her.

"Miss Belinda," said he, "will you allow me to dine with you?"

"You must do as you like," said Belinda, quickly, starting back.

"Not at all," said Mr. Griffiths. "It is entirely as you shall decide. If you don't like my company, you need only say so. I shall not be offended. Well, shall we dine together?"

"Oh, certainly," laughed Belinda, confused in her turn.

So the two sat down to dine together. For the first time in his life Guy thought the great room light enough and bright and comfortable. The gold and silver plate didn't seem to crush him, nor the draperies to suffocate, nor the great columns ready to fall upon him. There was Belinda picking her grapes and playing with the sugar-plums. He could hardly believe it possible. His poor old heart gave great wistful thumps (if such a thing is possible) at the sound of her voice. She had lost much of her shyness, and they were talking of anything that came into their heads. She had been telling him about Myrtle Cottage, and the spiders there, and looking up, laughing, she was surprised to see him staring at her very sadly and kindly. He turned away abruptly, and began to help himself to all sorts of things out of the silver dishes.

"It's very good of you," Guy said, looking away, "to come and brighten this dismal house, and to stay with a poor suffering woman and a great uncouth fellow like myself."

"But you are both so very kind," said Belinda, simply. "I shall never forget——"

"Kind!" cried Guy, very roughly. "I behaved like a brute to you and your father yesterday. I am not used to ladies' society. I am stupid and shy and awkward."

"If you were very stupid," said Belle, smiling, "you would not have said that, Mr. Griffiths. Stupid people always think themselves charming."

When Guy said good-night immediately after dinner as usual, he sighed again, and looked at her with such kind and melancholy eyes that Belle felt an odd affection and compassion for him. "I never should have thought it possible to like him so much," thought the girl, as she slowly went along the passage to Mrs. Griffiths' door.

It was an odd life this young creature led in the great silent stifling house, with uncouth Guy for her playfellow, the sick woman's complaints and fancies for her duty in life. The silence of it all, its very comfort and splendour, oppressed Belinda more at times than a simpler and more busy life. But the garden was an endless pleasure and refreshment, and she used to stroll about, skim over the terraces and walks, smell the roses, feed the birds and the gold fishes. Sometimes I have stood at my window watching the active figure flitting by in and out under the trellis, fifteen times round the pond, thirty-two times along the terrace walk. Belle was obliged to set herself tasks, or she would have got tired sometimes of wandering about by herself. All this time she never thought of Guy except as a curious sort of companion; any thought of sentiment had never once occurred to her.

VI.

ONE day that Belle had been in the garden longer than usual, she remembered a note for Mrs. Griffiths that she had forgotten to write, and springing up the steps into the hall, on the way, with some roses in her apron, she suddenly almost ran up against Guy, who had come home earlier than usual. The girl stood blushing and looking more charming than ever. The young fellow stood quite still too, looking with such expressive and admiring glances that Belinda blushed deeper still, and made haste to escape to her room. Presently the gong sounded, and there was no help for it, and she had to go down again. Guy was in the dining-room as polite and as shy as usual, and Belinda gradually forgot the passing impression. The butler put the dessert on the table and left them, and when she had finished her fruit Belinda got up to say good-by. As she was leaving the room she heard Guy's footsteps following. She stopped short. He came up to her. He looked very pale, and said suddenly in a quick, husky voice, "Belle, will you marry me?" Poor Belinda opened her grey eyes full in his face. She could hardly believe she had heard aright. She was startled, taken aback, but she followed her impulse of the moment, and answered gravely, "No, Guy."

He wasn't angry or surprised. He had known it all along, poor fellow, and expected nothing else. He only sighed, looked at her once again, and then went away out of the room.

Poor Belle, she stood there where he had left her,—the lights burnt, the great table glittered, the curtains waved. It was like a strange dream. She clasped her hands together, and then suddenly ran and fled away up to her own room,—frightened, utterly puzzled, bewildered, not knowing what to do or to whom to speak. It was a comfort to be summoned as usual to read to Mrs. Griffiths. She longed to pour out her story to the poor lady, but she dreaded agitating her. She read as she was bid. Once she stopped short, but her mistress impatiently motioned her to go on. She obeyed, stumbling and tumbling over the words before her, until there came a knock at the door, and, contrary to his custom, Guy entered the room. He looked very pale, poor fellow, and sad and subdued. "I wanted to see you, Miss Belinda," he said aloud, "and to tell you that I hope this will make no difference, and that you will remain with us as if nothing had happened. You warned me, mamma, but I could not help myself. It's my own fault. Good-night. That is all I had to say."

Belle turned wistfully to Mrs. Griffiths. The thin hand was impatiently twisting the coverlet. "Of course—Who would have anything to say to him? Foolish fellow," she muttered in her indistinct way. "Go on, Miss Barly."

"Oh, but tell me first, ought I remain here?" Belle asked, imploringly.

"Certainly, unless you are unhappy with us," the sick woman answered, peevishly. Mrs. Griffiths never made any other allusion to what had happened. I think the truth was that she did not care very much for

anything outside the doors of her sick-room. Perhaps she thought her son had been over-hasty, and that in time Belinda might change her mind. To people lying on their last sick-beds, the terrors, anxieties, longings of life seem very curious and strange. They seem to forget that they were once anxious, hopeful, eager themselves, as they lie gazing at the awful veil which will so soon be withdrawn from before their fading eyes.

A sort of constraint came between Guy and Belinda at first, but it wore away by degrees. He often alluded to his proposal, but in so hopeless and gentle a way that she could not be angry, still she was disquieted and unhappy. She felt that it was a false and awkward position. She could not bear to see him looking ill and sad, as he did at times, with great black rings under his dark eyes. It was worse still when she saw him brighten up with happiness at some chance word she let fall now and then—speaking inadvertently of home, as he did, or of the roses next year. He must not mistake her. She could not bear to pain him by hard words, and yet sometimes she felt it was her duty to speak them. One day she met him in the street, on her way back to the house. The roll of the passing carriage-wheels gave Guy confidence, and, walking by her side, he began to say, "Now I never know what delightful surprise may not be waiting for me at every street corner. Ah, Miss Belle, my whole life might be one long dream of wonder and happiness, if" "Don't speak like this ever again ; I shall go away," said Belle, interrupting, and crossing the road, in her agitation, under the very noses of two omnibus horses. "I wish I could like you enough to marry you. I shall always love you enough to be your friend ; please don't talk of anything else." Belle said this in a bright brisk imploring decided way, and hoped to have put an end to the matter. That day she came to me and told her little story. There were almost as many reasons for her staying as for her leaving, the poor child thought. I could not advise her to go, for the assistance that she was able to send home was very valuable. (Guy laughed, and utterly refused to accept a sixpence of her salary.) Mrs. Griffiths evidently wanted her ; Guy, poor fellow, would have given all he had to keep her, as we all knew too well.

Circumstance orders events sometimes, when people themselves, with all their powers and knowledge of good and of evil, are but passive instruments in the hands of fate. News came that Mr. Barly was ill, and little Belinda, with an anxious face, and a note in her trembling hand, came into Mrs. Griffiths' room one day to say she must go to him directly. "Your father is ill," wrote Anna. "Circumstances demand your immediate return to him." Guy happened to be present, and when Belle left the room he followed her out into the passage.

"You are going ?" he said.

"I don't know what Anna means by circumstances, but papa is ill, and wants me," said Belinda, almost crying.

"And I want you," said Guy ; "but that don't matter of course. Go—go, since you wish it."

After all, perhaps it was well she was going, thought Belle, as she went to pack up her boxes. Poor Guy's sad face haunted her. She seemed to carry it away in her box with her other possessions.

It would be difficult to describe what he felt, poor fellow, when he came upon the luggage standing ready corded in the hall, and he found that Belle had taken him at his word. He was so silent a man, so self-contained, so diffident of his own strength to win her love in time, so unused to the ways of the world and of women, that he could be judged by no ordinary rule. His utter despair and bewilderment would have been laughable almost, if they had not been so genuine. He paced about the garden with hasty uncertain footsteps, muttering to himself as he went along, and angrily cutting at the rose-hedges. "Of course she must go, since she wished it;—of course she must—of course, of course. What would the house be like when she was gone?" For an instant a vision of a great dull vault without warmth, or light or colour, or possible comfort anywhere, rose before him. He tried to imagine what his life would be if she never came back into it; but as he stood still trying to seize the picture, it seemed to him that it was a thing not to be imagined or thought of. Wherever he looked he saw her, everywhere and in everything. He had imagined himself unhappy; now he discovered that for the last few weeks, since little Belinda had come, he had basked in the summer she had brought, and found new life in the sunshine of her presence. Of an evening he had come home eagerly from his daily toil looking to find her. When he left early in the morning he would look up with kind eyes at her windows as he drove away. Once, early one morning, he had passed her near the lodge-gate, standing in the shadow of the great aspen-tree, and making way for the horses to go by. Belle was holding back the clean stiff folds of her pink muslin dress; she looked up with that peculiar blink of her grey eyes, smiled and nodded her bright head, and shrunk away from the horses. Every morning Guy used to look under the tree after that to see if she were there by chance, even if he had parted from her but a minute before. Good stupid old fellow! he used to smile to himself at his own foolishness. One of his fancies about her was that Belinda was a bird who would fly away some day, and perch up in the branches of one of the great trees, far, far beyond his reach. And now was this fancy coming true? was she going—leaving him—flying away where he could not follow her? He gave an inarticulate sound of mingled anger and sorrow and tenderness which relieved his heart, but which puzzled Belle herself, who was coming down the garden walk to meet him.

"I was looking for you, Mr. Griffiths," said Belle. "Your mother wants to speak to you. I too wanted to ask you something," the girl went on, blushing. "She is kind enough to wish me to come back. . . . But——"

Belle stopped short, blushed up, and began pulling at the leaves sprouting on either side of the narrow alley. When she looked up after a minute, with one of her quick short-sighted glances, she found that Guy's two little brown eyes were fixed upon her steadily.

"Don't be afraid that I shall trouble you," he said, reddening. "If you knew—if you had the smallest conception what your presence is to me, you would come back. I think you would."

Miss Barly didn't answer, but blushed up again and walked on in silence, hanging her head to conceal the two bright tears which had come into her eyes. She was so sorry, so very sorry. But what could she do? Guy had walked on to the end of the rose-garden, and Belle had followed. Now, instead of turning towards the house, he had come out into the bright-looking kitchen-garden, with its red brick walls hung with their various draperies of lichen and mosses, and garlands of clambering fruit. Four little paths led up to the turf carpet which had been laid down in the centre of the garden: here a fountain plashed with a tranquil fall of waters upon water; all sorts of sweet kitchen-herbs, mint and thyme and parsley, were growing along the straight-cut beds. Birds were pecking at the nets along the walls; one little sparrow that had been drinking at the fountain flew away as they approached. The few bright-coloured straggling flowers caught the sunlight and reflected it in sparks like the water.

The master of this pleasant place put out his great clumsy hand, and took hold of Belle's soft reluctant fingers. "Ah, Belle," he said, "is there no hope for me? Will there never be any chance?"

"I wish with all my heart there was a chance," said poor Belle, pulling away her hand impatiently. "Why do you wound and pain me by speaking again and again of what is far best forgotten? Dear Mr. Griffiths, I will marry you to-morrow, if you desire it," said the girl, with a sudden impulse turning pale and remembering all that she owed to his forbearance and gentleness; "but please, please don't ask it." She looked so frightened and desperate that poor Guy felt that this was worse than anything, and sadly shook his head.

"Don't be afraid," he said. "I don't want to marry you against your will, or keep you here. Yes, you shall go home, and I will stop here alone, and cut my throat if I find I cannot bear the place without you. I am only joking. I daresay I shall do very well," said Griffiths with a sigh; and he turned away and began stamping off in his clumsy way. Then he suddenly stopped and looked back. Belle was standing in the sunshine with her face hidden in her hands. She was so puzzled, and sorry, and hopeless, and mournful. The only thing she could do was to cry, poor child,—and by some instinct Griffiths guessed that she was crying; he knew it,—his heart melted with pity. The poor fellow came back trembling. "My dearest," he said, "don't cry. What a brute I am to make you cry. Tell me anything in the whole world I can do to make you happy."

"If I could only do anything for you," said Belle, "that would make me happier."

"Then come back, my dear," said Guy, "and don't fly away yet for ever, as you threatened just now. Come back and cheer up my mother, and make tea and a little sunshine for me, until—until some confounded fellow comes and carries you off," said poor Griffiths.

"Oh, that will never be. Yes; I'll come," said Belle, earnestly. "I'll go home for a week and come back; indeed I will."

"Only let me know," said Mr. Griffiths, "and my mother will send the carriage for you. Shall we say a week?" he added, anxious to drive a hard bargain.

"Yes," said Belinda, smiling; "I'll write and tell you the day."

Nothing would induce Griffiths to order the carriage until after dinner, and it was quite late at night when Belle got home.

VII.

Poor little Myrtle Cottage looked very small and shabby as she drove up in the darkness to the door. A brilliant illumination streamed from all the windows. Martha rubbed her elbows at the sight of the gorgeous equipage. Fanny came to the door surprised, laughing, giggling, mysterious. Everything looked much as usual, except that a large and pompous-looking gentleman was sitting on the drawing-room sofa, and beside him Anna, with a huge ring on her fourth finger, attempting to blush as Belle came into the room. Belle saw that she was not wanted, and ran upstairs to her father, who was better, and sitting in the arm-chair by his bedside. The poor old man nearly cried with delight and surprise, held out both his shaking hands to her, and clung tenderly to the bright young daughter. Belle sat beside him, holding his hand, asking him a hundred questions, kissing his wrinkled face and cheeks, and telling him all that had happened. Mr. Barly, too, had news to give. The fat gentleman downstairs, he told Belle, was no other than Anna's old admirer, the doctor, of whom mention has been made. He had re-proposed the day before, and was now sitting on the sofa on probation. Fanny's prospects, too, seemed satisfactory. "She assures me," said Mr. Barly, "that young Ogden is on the point of coming forward. An old man like me, my dear, is naturally anxious to see his children settled in life and comfortably provided for. I don't know who would be good enough for my Belinda. Not that awkward lout of a Griffiths. No, no; we must look out better than that."

"Oh, papa, if you knew how good and how kind he is!" said Belle, with a sudden revulsion of feeling; but she broke off abruptly, and spoke of something else.

The other maid, who had already gone to bed the night before when Belle arrived at the cottage, gave a loud shriek when she went into the room next morning and found some one asleep in the bed. Belle awoke, laughed and explained, and asked her to bring up her things.

"Bring 'em hup?" said the girl. "What, all them 'ampers that's come by the cart? No, miss, that's more than me and Martha have the strength for. I should crick my back if I were to attempt for to do such a thing."

"Hampers,—what hampers?" Belle asked; but when she went down she found the little passage piled with cases, flowers and game and

preserves, and some fine old port for Mr. Barly, and some roses for Belle. As Belinda came downstairs, in her fresh morning dress, Anna, who had been poking about and examining the various packages, looked up with offended dignity.

"I think, considering that I am mistress here," said she, "these hampers should have been directed to me, instead of to you, Belinda. Mr. Griffiths strangely forgets. Indeed, I fear that you too are wanting in any great sense of ladylike propriety."

"Prunes, prism, propriety," said Belle, gaily. "Never mind, dear Anna; he's sent the things for all of us. Mr. Griffiths certainly never meant me to drink two dozen bottles of port wine in a week."

"You are evading the question," said Anna. "I have been wishing to talk to you for some time past,—come into the dining-room, if you please."

It seems almost impossible to believe, and yet I cannot help fearing that out of sheer spite and envy Anna Barly had even then determined that if she could prevent it, Belinda should never go back to Castle Gardens again, but remain in the cottage. The sight of the pretty things which had been given her there, all the evidences which told of the esteem and love in which she was held, maddened the foolish woman. I can give no other reason for the way in which she opposed Belinda's return to Mrs. Griffiths. "Her duty is at home," said Anna. "I myself shall be greatly engaged with Thomas,"—so she had already learnt to call Dr. Robinson. "Fanny also is preoccupied; Belinda must remain."

When Belle demurred and said that for the next few weeks she would like to return as she had promised, and stay until Mrs. Griffiths was suited with another companion, Anna's indignation rose and overpowered her dignity. Was it *her* sister who was so oblivious of the laws of society, propriety, modesty. Anna feared that Belinda had not reflected upon the strange appearance her conduct must have to others, to the Ogdens, to them all. What was the secret attraction which took her back? Anna said she had rather not inquire, and went on with her oration. "Unmaidenly,—not to be thought of,—the advice of those whose experience might be trusted"—does one not know the rigmarole by heart? When even the father, who had been previously talked to, sided with his eldest daughter, when Thomas, who was also called into the family conclave, nodded his head in an ominous manner, poor little Belinda, frightened, shaken, undecided, almost promised that she would do as they desired; and as she promised, the thought of poor Guy's grief and wistful haggard face came before her, and her poor little heart ached and sank at the thought. But not even Belinda, with all her courage, could resist the decision of so much experience, or Anna's hints and innuendoes, or, more insurmountable than all the rest, a sudden shyness and consciousness which had come over the poor little maiden, who turned crimson with shame and annoyance.

Belinda had decided as she was told—had done as her conscience bid her,—and yet there was but little satisfaction in this duty accomplished. For about half an hour she went about feeling like a heroine, and then without any reason or occasion, it seemed to her that the mask had come off her face, that she had discovered herself to be a traitress, that she had betrayed and abandoned her kindest friends; she called herself a selfish, ungrateful wretch, she wondered what Guy would think of her; she was out of temper, out of spirits, out of patience with herself, and the click of the blind swinging in the draft was unendurable. The complacent expression of Anna's handsome face put her teeth on edge. When Fanny tumbled over the footstool with a playful shriek, to everybody's surprise Belinda burst out crying.

Those few days were endless, slow, dull, unbearable—every second brought its pang of regret and discomfort and remorse. It seemed to Belinda that her ears listened, her mouth talked, her eyes looked at the four walls of the cottage, at the furze on the common, at the faces of her sisters, with a sort of mechanical effort. As if she were acting her daily life, not living it naturally and without effort. Only when she was with her father did she feel unconstrained; but even then there was an unexpressed reproach in her heart like a dull pain that she could not quiet. And so the long days lagged. Although Dr. Robinson enlivened them with his presence, and the Ogdens drove up to carry Fanny off to the happy regions of Capulet Square (E. for Elysium Anna I think would have docketed the district), to Belinda those days seemed slow, and dark and dim, and almost hopeless at times.

On the day on which Belinda was to have returned there came a letter to me telling her story plainly enough:—"I must not come back, my dearest Miss Williamson," she wrote. "I am going to write to Mrs. Griffiths and dear kind Mr. Guy to-morrow to tell them so. Anna does not think it is right. Papa clings to me and wants me, now that both my sisters are going to leave him. How often I shall think of you all—of all your goodness to me, of the beautiful roses, and my dear little room! Do you think Mr. Guy would let me take one or two books as a remembrance—Hume's *History of England*, Porteous's *Sermons*, and *Essays on Reform*? I should like to have something to remind me of you all, and to look at sometimes, since they say I am not to see you all again. Good-by, and thank you and Mrs. H. a thousand thousand times.—Your ever, ever affectionate BELINDA. P.S.—Might I also ask for that little green volume of the *Golden Treasury* which is up in the tower room?"

This was what Guy had feared all along. Once she was gone, he knew by instinct she would never come back. I hardly know how it fared with the poor fellow all this time. He kept out of our way, and would try to escape me, but once by chance I met him, and I was shocked by the change which had come over him. I had my own opinion, as we all have at times. H. and I had talked it over,—for old women are good for

something after all, and can sometimes play a sentimental part in life as well as young ones. It seemed to us impossible that Belinda should not relent to so much goodness and unselfishness, and come back again some day never to go any more. We knew enough of Anna Barly to guess the part *she* had played, nor did we despair of seeing Belinda among us once more. But some one must help her, she could not reach us unassisted ; and so I told Mrs. Griffiths, who had remarked upon her son's distress and altered looks.

"If you will lend us the carriage," I said, "either H. or I will go over to Dumbleton to-morrow, and I doubt not that we shall bring her." H. went. She told me about it afterwards. Anna was fortunately absent. Mr. Barly was downstairs, and H. was able to talk to him a little bit before Belinda came down. The poor old man always thought as he was told to think, and since his illness he was more uncertain and broken than ever. He was dismayed when H. told him in her decided way that he was probably sacrificing two people's happiness for life by his ill-timed interference. When at last Belinda came down, she looked almost as ill as Griffiths himself. She rushed into H.'s arms with a scream of delight, and eagerly asked a hundred questions. "How were they all—what were they all doing?"

H. was very decided. Everybody was very ill and wanted Belinda back. "Your father says he can spare you very well," said she. "Why not come back with me this afternoon, if only for a time? It is your duty," H. continued, in her dry way. "You should not leave them in this uncertainty." "Go, my child—pray go," urged Mr. Barly. And at last Belinda consented shyly, nothing loth.

H. began to question her when she had got her safe in the carriage. Belinda said she had not been well. She could not sleep, she said. She had had bad dreams. She blushed and confessed that she had dreamt of Guy lying dead in the kitchen-garden. She had gone about the house trying, indeed she had tried to be cheerful and busy as usual, but she felt unhappy, ungrateful. "Oh, what a foolish girl I am," she said. All the lights were burning in the little town, the west was glowing and reflected in the river, the boats trembled and shot through the shiny waters, and the people were out upon the banks, as they crossed the bridge again on their way from Dumbleton. Belle was happier certainly, but crying from agitation.

"Have I made him miserable, poor fellow? Oh, I think I shall blame myself all my life," said she, covering her face with her hands. "Oh, H.! H.! what shall I do?"

H. dryly replied that she must be guided by circumstances, and when they reached Castle Gardens, kissed her and set her down at the great gate, while she herself went home in the carriage.

It was all twilight by this time among the roses. Belinda met the gate-keeper, who touched his hat and told her his master was in the garden ; and so instead of going into the house she flitted away towards

the garden, crossed the lawns, and went in and out among the bowers and trellises looking for him—frightened by her own temerity at first, gaining courage by degrees. It was so still, so sweet, so dark; the stars were coming out in the evening sky, a meteor went flashing from east to west, a bat flew across her path; all the scent hung heavy in the air. Twice Belinda called out timidly, "Mr. Griffiths, Mr. Griffiths!" but no one answered. Then she remembered her dream in sudden terror, and hurried into the kitchen-garden to the fountain where they had parted.

What had happened? Some one was lying on the grass. Was this her dream? was it Guy? was he dead? had she killed him? Belinda ran up to him, seized his hand, and called him Guy—dear Guy; and Guy, who had fallen asleep from very weariness and sadness of heart, opened his eyes to hear himself called by the voice he loved best in the world; while the sweetest eyes, full of tender tears, were gazing anxiously into his ugly face. Ugly? Fairy tales have told us this at least, that ugliness and dullness do not exist for those who truly love. Had she ever thought him rough, uncouth, unlovable? Ah! she had been blind in those days; she knew better now. As they walked back through the twilight garden that night, Guy said humbly,—

"I shan't do you any credit, Belinda; I can only love you."

"*Only!*" said Belinda.

She didn't finish her sentence; but he understood very well what she meant.

Mobs.

Ἄλλ' οὐ σὺ τούτων αἴτιος, μὴ φρονίσῃς
Ἄλλ' οἷ σε ταῦτ' ἐξηπάτων.

THE British public, which has twice within the last ten months been almost frightened out of its propriety by the London "Leaguers," had, up to last year, enjoyed so long an immunity from spectacles of this nature, that it might be supposed to have pretty well forgotten what a mob really was. In 1848 the mob which assembled at Kennington, though considerable in point of numbers and seditious enough in its designs, was kept at a respectful distance, and was rather heard of than seen. The Chartist riots of 1839 did not come near London, and were indeed the work rather of regular insurgents than of mobs. Up to 1866 nothing like the storming of Hyde Park had been witnessed for a whole generation; and if we refer to London only, we must go back as far as the Gordon riots for any similar acts of downright violence.

But if we do go back to the eighteenth century,—the supposed century of strong government and aristocratic authority,—we shall find the London mob exercising an influence upon public affairs which our own more popular and liberal-minded age would not tolerate for a moment. This circumstance, strange as it may seem at first sight, is easily accounted for. The only mode of dealing with a mob in those days was by calling out the troops. A standing army was one of the most unpopular appendages of the most unpopular dynasty in our annals. To employ it against the people was always a hazardous experiment. To do so was to concentrate on one single act of authority almost every objection that could be urged to the Revolution. It was the revival of arbitrary power without the sanction of hereditary right: the coercion of the people by princes who were the creatures of the people. Unreasonable as these arguments may seem now, they were capable of being urged against Government with fatal effect then. And in the traditional dislike of English Ministers to employ soldiers on such occasions, we see one surviving vestige of the political passions of that epoch. But another, and perhaps more deeply-seated cause of the prominence usurped by mobs in the days of our great-grandfathers, is to be found in the political character and social position of the aristocracy. During the interval which elapsed between the English revolution and the French, the patrician order in this country had established a dominion which was seemingly immutable and eternal. Their confidence in themselves was absolute; and they no more expected that the people would ever try to govern, than Achilles expected that his horse

would ever try to speak. At the same time they were divided into factions scarcely less bitter than the factions of the white and red roses. The contempt which they felt for the people was, if possible, excelled by the hatred which they bore each other: and both combined to promote that popular turbulence which is a salient feature of the period. Each faction in turn used the mob against its rival without the slightest fear of any damage to their common interests. A mansion or a meeting-house might be burnt down; a statesman might be rolled in the mud; a plebeian might be pricked with a bayonet, or even get a bullet in his gizzard; but these things were trifles to the men of that epoch, who always maintained that it was the first duty of a patriot to save his country; and who laid the blame of such accidents alternately on the wicked Minister who was aiming at despotism, or the profligate traitor who was in correspondence with Avignon or Boston. In the face of these tremendous considerations, a life or two more or less was a matter of supreme indifference. The chances were that the soldiers would be afraid to fire, or that the mob would run away before a collision could occur. But whatever happened, the aristocracy felt safe about itself. Thus we see that the backwardness of the Government to employ the only force at its command in the suppression of popular tumults, and the forwardness of the aristocracy to make use of agitation for the embarrassment of political rivals, combined together to ensure the mob great licence for some eighty or a hundred years. Things are changed now. Formerly the mob was the tool of the patricians. Now it has set up in business on its own account. In the last century there was never a mob of any consequence without some aristocrat to back it. Now-a-days the mob, like the Ring, has lost its "Corinthian" supporters altogether. Whether this loss is likely to enhance or to diminish its dangerous elements, we leave to wiser heads than ours to say.

The earliest mob of any note in the eighteenth century was in the reign of Queen Anne, in the year 1709. At that time the Church of England had grown immensely popular with the English people; and it is easy to see why. Dissent was still associated with Puritanism; and half a century had not effaced the memory of Nehemiah Solsgrace and Corporal Humgudgeon. Your ordinary Englishman then as now hated Popery with a hatred peculiar to himself: and the memorable stand of the seven bishops had gone straight to the national heart. It is not, perhaps, surprising that notwithstanding this episode the very party in the Church which represented these prelates should have been, upon the whole, Jacobite. But it is curious that the English populace should have followed them in this apparent inconsistency. Such, however, was the fact. Dr. Sacheverel was a Tory and divine-right man of the most highflying description. In the month of November, 1709, he preached a sermon before the Lord Mayor, in which he indulged himself to the utmost in the exaltation of all his favourite ideas. Passive obedience, divine right, and all the articles of Caroline Toryism, were laid down by

him as undoubted axioms not to be questioned by any faithful son of the Church of England. The Lord Mayor desired the sermon to be printed : but the Government of the day took a very different view of the transaction, and eventually ordered it to be burned. However, in the meantime Sacheverel had been impeached, and at once became a popular idol. It would have been far wiser to punish him, if it were necessary to punish him at all, with as little ostentation as possible. But a parliamentary impeachment, with a trial at Westminster Hall, was the very thing which Sacheverel's friends might have prayed for. The consequences were foreseen by Lord Somers and Sir Joseph Jekyl ; but the more violent counsels of the Duke of Wharton prevailed against them ; and the trial was begun. Sacheverel at this time was living in the Temple ; and he was escorted to and fro every day by immense crowds of people, who cheered him and tried to kiss his hand. As the trial lasted three weeks we can imagine the state to which the streets of London were reduced. Occasionally the mob burst out in acts of open violence, and would turn aside to burn a conventicle or beat a Whig, and then resume their ordinary avocations. In these outrages they were, according to Bishop Burnett, openly encouraged by men of rank, who accompanied the crowd in hackney-coaches, and threw money to the rioters. Their watchword was the Church and Sacheverel, and every man who refused to join in the shout was liable to abuse or blows. Burnett says he saw before his own door a man's skull cleft open with a spade because he refused this pious test. The mob, it seems, were debating the propriety of burning the Bishop's own house, when they heard of the approach of the Guards, and immediately dispersed. As the Bishop's residence at this time was in St. John's Court, Clerkenwell, we see how wide-spread the disturbance must have been, and that it was by no means confined to the line of march between the Temple and Westminster. No systematic efforts seem to have been made to put the mob down. The work of burning and beating went on, not indeed without interruption, but without any effectual check. Some lives were lost in Lincoln's Inn Fields, where the mob made a large bonfire out of the pews and wainscoting of a dissenting chapel, which stood, it seems, somewhere in the Temple, and belonged to a Mr. Burgess. But nothing like a regular patrol was established until the mob had pretty well worked its will upon the adverse party. The subject, of course, was continually discussed in Parliament, and the House of Commons presented an address to the Queen, begging her to issue a proclamation, to offer rewards, and to take other measures for suppressing these gross disorders. Anne returned a gracious answer, complying with the prayer of the House. But there was no great zeal at Court in favour of strong measures ; and though several persons were apprehended, of whom two were convicted of high treason and sentenced to death, neither were allowed to die. But the effect produced upon the public mind by these formidable riots was seen most conspicuously in the debates which followed the conviction of Sacheverel,

when the degree of punishment to be inflicted on him was under discussion. It seems certain that the House of Lords took a milder view of his offence than they would have taken, but for fear of the vengeance of the mob. Nor were the consequences of these riots confined to the fortunes of the single individual who was the source of them. It was thought at the time that they had seriously injured the prospects of the Whig party and the Hanover succession. And certain it is that, encouraged by its success and its impunity in this particular instance, the London mob grew more troublesome and more turbulent for some few years than it had been for many generations; so much so that in the year 1717 even the mild and placable Addison felt moved to write a paper in the *Freeholder*, in which he told the "rabble" that if they didn't learn how to behave themselves, they must be taught that Government could crush them. It is pretty clear, however, that in this case, as in many others, the mob would not have produced such an impression as to modify the sentence passed on a great public offender, had it not to a great extent reflected the passions and prejudices of the country. Though very likely the believers in divine right and passive obedience were a minority, a conviction that the Whigs were intent on some nefarious designs against the Church was much more generally diffused; and people, who cared perhaps little for Sacheverel and his doctrines, were furious against his enemies, who were supposed to be "Presbyterians" in disguise.

The next great English mob which has acquired historical celebrity distinguished itself in 1733 against the famous Excise Bill of Sir Robert Walpole. This is an almost perfect instance of the submission of the majority of the House of Commons to a demonstration of physical force openly abetted by the minority. On the merits of the excise scheme itself we can hardly be expected to enter. It is sufficient to say that it was supported by a substantial majority, and would undoubtedly have become law, but for the audacious attitude of the London populace, who assembled in vast numbers in Palace Yard, and even penetrated to the lobbies of the House of Commons. It is amusing to read the different accounts given of this assemblage by the different parties in the House. Walpole called them sturdy beggars. Barnard, Tory Member for the City, thought it hard that "merchants of figure and character might not come down to the lobbies to consult with their friends on questions which affected their own interests." It seems, in fact, that the mixture of ruffianism and respectability in the mob of 1733 was much about the same as we have witnessed at a later period. The "rough" element asserted itself in attempts to mob the Prime Minister and other obnoxious Members of Parliament. The men "of figure and character" seem to have been absent when they were most wanted, and to have made no effort to restrain the excesses of their allies. The following extract from Sir Robert Walpole's speech will, perhaps, be found interesting at this moment:—
 "As to those clamours which have been raised without doors, and which
 "are now so much insisted on, it is very well known by whom and by what

"methods they were raised, and it is no difficult matter to guess with what views; but I am very far from taking them to be the sense of the nation, or believing that the sentiments of the majority of the people were thereby expressed. The most part of the people concerned in those clamours did not speak their own sentiments; they were played by others like so many puppets; it was not the puppets that spoke, it was those behind the curtain that played them, and made them speak whatever they had uttered. There is now a most extraordinary concourse of people at our doors. Gentlemen may say what they please of the multitudes now at our door, and in all the avenues leading to this House; they may call them a modest multitude if they will; but whatever temper they were in when they came hither, it may be very much altered now, after having waited so long at our door. It may be a very easy matter for some designing, seditious person to raise a tumult and disorder among them; and when tumults are once begun, no man knows where they may end: he is a greater man than any I know in the nation that could, with the same ease, appease them. For this reason, I must think that it was neither prudent nor regular to use any methods to bringing such multitudes to this place, under any pretence whatever. Gentlemen may give them what name they think fit. It may be said that they came hither as humble supplicants; but I know whom the law calls sturdy beggars; and those who brought them hither could not be certain but that they might have behaved in the same manner."*

On this night (March 14), after carrying his resolution by a majority of sixty-one, the Minister was advised to make his exit by a back way, and so give his enemies the slip. In spite, however, of the threats of the populace encouraged by the Opposition orators, he continued to press his measure forward, and obtained decisive though diminishing majorities upon each division. But the mob became so violent at last that Sir Robert's resolution wavered. The grounds on which his ultimate decision was taken are, at this distance of time, not very clear. It is certain, however, that the conduct of the mob had not only strengthened the regular Opposition, but had encouraged some of the Minister's party, who wanted only an excuse for defection, to declare that they could no longer support him. It is probable that both the King and Queen, who equally sympathised with "a brave fellow," which the monarch pronounced Walpole to be, would have stood by him to the last. And no doubt, if the Court had been resolute, the Bill could have been carried through the House of Commons. But in the case of a serious riot, some doubt, it seems, existed as to what extent the troops could be relied upon. The soldiers believed that the Bill would raise the price of their tobacco, and were almost as ripe for mutiny as the nation for rebellion.† A serious defection was threatened in the House of Lords; and Lord Bolingbroke's party at St. James's was said to be more numerous than at Dawley. On

* *Parliamentary History*, vol. vii. p. 351.

† Hervey.

the night of the 10th of April, after a petition from the City had been rejected by only seventeen votes, Walpole had his friends to supper, when he said, with a smile, "this dance it will no farther go," and that to-morrow he meant to sound a retreat. Whether it was before or after this supper that he held a meeting of his party, and declared that as the Act could not be carried into execution without an armed force, he would never be the Minister to enforce taxes by bloodshed, does not very clearly appear; and after what has been said of the supposed disposition of the troops, our readers may suspect that, in using this language, the Minister was taking credit to himself for a rather cheap kind of magnanimity. His resolution, however, was not received without considerable dissatisfaction. It was especially urged by his friends that there would be an end of all supplies if mobs were to control the legislature. But they did not shake his determination, and on the 11th of April the Bill was virtually abandoned, by a motion, introduced by Walpole in person, that the second reading should be postponed for two months. This humiliating concession, which was the cause of much wailing and gnashing of teeth in St. James's Palace, did not have the effect of disarming the resentment of the mob against the authors of the obnoxious scheme. On the night of its withdrawal a larger mob than usual filled all the precincts of the House of Commons; and, though they must have been informed of what had occurred inside, they seemed more ferocious than ever. When the House was rising, some of Walpole's friends, who had been outside, came back and told him what he must expect if he went out by the public passage. But Sir Robert gallantly resolved to face the worst, saying there was no end of flying from such menaces, and so, with ten or a dozen friends close round him, and a couple of servants, he marched boldly out upon the rioters. Fifty constables had been stationed outside the House, to secure a free passage for Members; and they strove to keep a lane for Walpole and his friends to pass through. But this was impossible. A general *mêlée* ensued, in which the constables' staves seem to have hurt as many friends as foes. One account says that a ruffian got hold of Walpole's cloak behind his neck, and nearly strangled him. Several of his protectors were badly hurt. Swords were drawn at last. And by that means, and by that only, was the Minister enabled to reach his carriage, and get safely to his own house. Where "the merchants of figure and character" were on this occasion, we are not informed.

The withdrawal of the Bill was of course regarded as a great popular triumph, and was celebrated with bonfires and illuminations not only in London but throughout the whole country. Sir Robert Walpole and a fat woman, intended for the Queen, were burned in effigy together. But on the whole these latest excesses of the mob rather tended to discredit their cause than to improve it; and the bulk of the people, satisfied with the end gained, soon perhaps grew ashamed of the means by which it was accomplished.

That the riots of 1733 represented the public feeling of their day quite

as fully as the riots of 1709 the public opinion of that day, and derived, indeed, their whole influence from the consciousness of this fact which pervaded both the Court and Parliament, is indisputable. Sir Robert Walpole, as we see, thought, or affected to think, differently; but it is almost beyond a question at the present day that a very great proportion of the English people, down perhaps to the accession of George III., were anti-Hanoverian in their sympathies, and loved an excuse for bothering a Whig Government. A rebellion, indeed, was another matter. Rebellion was a harsh term,—a very harsh term, indeed, as the lawyers say; but for a little rioting, and cudgelling, and burning of conventicles, somebody was always good. And though the opposition to the Excise Bill was of course, to a great extent, raised on the merits of the measure, it was due in a still greater degree to the general unpopularity of the reigning family and the existing Government; and without the countenance of the aristocratic part of the community who shared in these sentiments, the mob could have done nothing.

To whomsoever we assign the credit, the victory in this instance was complete; and it is curious that after such a triumph more than thirty years should have elapsed before the mob again tried a fall with the constituted authorities.* When Wilkes, who had been expelled the House of Commons, and outlawed in 1763, returned to England in 1768, and was returned for the county of Middlesex, he was not only declared incapable of sitting, but was arrested and imprisoned in the King's Bench. The whole rabble of London were up in arms to protect their favourite. They rescued him once from the officers; but Wilkes had the good sense to surrender himself again, and remained in prison two years. The day of his incarceration was the 29th of April; and from that to the 10th of May, the day fixed for the meeting of Parliament, the neighbourhood of the prison was occupied by a determined mob, who made more than one attempt to deliver their champion by force. The reigning dynasty now, however, was firmer in its saddle than it had been in 1733, and there was much less reluctance to use troops against the mob. On the morning of the 10th of May, when there seemed reason to apprehend a renewed attack on the prison, more formidable than any which had preceded it, the magistrates appeared upon the spot with a regiment of infantry, which it was insinuated at the time had been chosen because it was a Scotch regiment, and indifferent to the liberties of the English. The Riot Act was read; it was answered by stones and brickbats. The troops fired, and killed six and wounded fifteen of the rioters. One man was shot by a soldier before the orders to fire had been given. He was found guilty of murder by a coroner's inquest, but was acquitted when brought to trial, and publicly presented with a purse of money by his colonel. Mr. Gillam, the magistrate, was likewise tried and acquitted. In this instance the mob was

* The Porteus mob is designedly omitted from our list, as being neither English nor political.

clearly foiled; for Wilkes remained in prison till 1770, and after he became Lord Mayor, and was allowed to take his seat, he discarded the profession of a demagogue. On this occasion the mob, though not without aristocratic support, does not seem to have reflected any great body of opinion in the country at large, where Wilkes was commonly regarded as a combination of atheist, profligate, and republican. The Wilkes mob, in fact, was a London mob, and nothing else. It had little or no connection with the "people" in its best sense, as the Excise mob undoubtedly had, and as several other mobs had afterwards, in a greater or less degree. Its worst effect was that it rekindled the spirit of riot in the London populace, which had slumbered for a whole generation, but which now again became for many years a source of great annoyance to Government, and of serious alarm to all well-disposed persons.

The next serious riot by which the peace of London was disturbed occurred only three years afterwards. It arose out of the attempt of the House of Commons to exclude parliamentary reporters. All the complicated details of this dispute would be wearisome to our readers. It may be sufficient to say that the name of parliamentary "privilege" had come to stink in the nostrils of the people, and that the opponents of the Government on this question enjoyed all the advantages which the active support of Seven Dials might be considered to confer. The printers of the reports took refuge in the City. The House of Commons sent its officer to arrest them. The Lord Mayor and other City magistrates, of whom Alderman Oliver was, like his lordship, a Member of the House of Commons, refused to recognize the Speaker's warrant; or, in other words, set up the privileges of the City against the privilege of Parliament. They were eventually committed to the Tower, where they remained for some time. But the end of the dispute was that the right of publication was conceded, though it is perhaps too much to assert that the mob had any hand in this result. Be that as it may, however, they showed their teeth on this occasion to some purpose. Lord North and Charles Fox, then a young man of twenty-two, and a hot Tory, were dragged out of their carriages, and rolled in the gutters. But this was hardly a question in which the *nation* was much interested. And no doubt, if Government had felt that it was really for the public good that this privilege should be enforced, it would have been enforced. We merely quote the acts of this mob to show to what a pitch popular licence had then risen. Imagine Lord Derby being rolled in the mud! Yet Lord North's Government was a stronger Government than Lord Derby's. And Lord Derby's Government has given, we are told, greater offence to the "people" than ever Lord North's did.

But we are now approaching the *locus classicus* of English riots, to which every one, after the lapse of near a century, still appeals as a terrible illustration of what it is possible for a mob to do even when apparently actuated by the best motives and obedient to regular discipline: we mean the "Gordon Riots." Nothing, said Lord Eldon, many years

afterwards, could have been more orderly than was the multitude in the morning, yet in the evening London was in flames. This is not a strictly accurate account of what did occur, for on the evening of the day on which the Protestant petition was presented, the proceedings of the mob were comparatively moderate. However, the old lord was speaking thirty-seven years after the event he was describing, and his words were near enough the truth for all practical purposes. In the session of Parliament of 1779 an Act had been passed—commonly known as Sir George Savile's Act—repealing some of the Roman Catholic disabilities imposed by the 11th and 12th of William III., which, unnecessary, perhaps, even when first enacted, had, eighty years afterwards, become intolerably oppressive and absurd. But the orthodoxy of the English lower orders remained up to the end of the eighteenth century unquenchable; and readily roused against Dissenters, it was still more easily, and still more fiercely inflammable, against Popery. The excitement against Sir George Savile's Act first began in Scotland, whence it rapidly spread into England, and resulted in the formation of Protestant associations to procure the repeal of the obnoxious statute. The movement was headed by Lord George Gordon, a son of the Duke of Gordon, and member for Ludgershall, in Wiltshire. His lordship was one of those mixtures of fool and fanatic which unhappily are not extinct in our own day, though their powers for mischief are diminished. What he expected to gain by the part he played it is impossible to conjecture. But it is difficult to believe that he was actuated by pure religious zeal. However that might be, his name and his rank made him a welcome leader to the Protestant Association of London, which seems to have numbered in its ranks a certain small minority of honest and respectable men, though the large majority were, of course, intemperate bigots. It was on Friday, the 2nd of June, 1780, that Lord George convened a grand Protestant meeting at St. George's-in-the-Fields, for the purpose of marching down to Westminster, and presenting the Protestant petition. If less than twenty thousand attended, he said, he should decline to present it. A great show of order and discipline was visible in his proceedings. He issued a string of resolutions regulating the line of march, and inviting the magistrates of London, Westminster, and Southwark to lend the aid of their presence towards overawing any riotous and evil-disposed persons who might be willing to disturb the peace. His arrangements were so far successful that he collected about a hundred thousand men at the place of muster, and, marching them in three columns across the different bridges, got them in to their places outside the Houses of Parliament by two o'clock in the afternoon. Their distinguishing badge was a blue cockade. But it soon appeared that many had mounted the cockade who cared very little for the cause. In point of fact that became evident at once which any but a fool must have foreseen at first, that of the whole number which had reached Westminster Hall the greater part was the lowest rabble, who could not be relied upon for an hour together to abstain from violence,

and whose Protestant zeal was about on a par with Dugald Dalgetty's when he served under the Lion of the North and the Bulwark of the Protestant Faith. Love of excitement, with good prospects of liquor and plunder, had drawn together most part of them, and they set about gratifying these respective passions in regular order. They amused themselves for several hours with pulling a number of old men out of their carriages, hustling them roughly, and tearing their lawn sleeves if they were bishops, or their coats and cravats if they were laymen. From insult they had almost gone to bloodshed; for it seems that Lord Boston, at all events, narrowly escaped with his life, and that only by the ingenious device of getting up a discussion among one or two of the more fanatical of the ringleaders, as to whether the Pope was Antichrist, during the heat of which he slipped away. The Bishop of Rochester took refuge in a private house, and escaped over the leads in woman's clothes. The Duke of Northumberland happened to be driving down to the House with a gentleman in black by his side. The mob at once declared that this must certainly be a Jesuit, so they forthwith robbed the Duke of his purse and gold watch. Inside Westminster Hall the scene must have begged all description. The lobby was crowded with the mob, who pressed so close up to the doors that Members could not get out to divide. Lord George himself was constantly in and out, encouraging his friends, and bidding them persevere. The question before the House was whether they should at once take into consideration the petition which his lordship had presented. They were almost unanimous against it. But nothing could be done while the mob continued in the lobby. And it was not till a party of the Foot Guards were at length got up by Lord North that the business of the House could go on. The lobbies were then cleared. The House decided to consider the petition on the sixth. The mob retired from the neighbourhood, and tranquillity seemed to be restored. The Duke of Richmond had that very afternoon, while his fellow Peers were being mobbed outside, introduced to the House of Lords a Bill for universal suffrage. It had naturally provoked much sarcasm; but nobody imagined at eight o'clock that evening, when the Peers broke up, what a dreadful confutation was in store for it.

On leaving Westminster Hall the mob divided into two parties, evidently bent on further mischief. But at first they were, as we have said, comparatively moderate. They did no more than burn down one Roman Catholic chapel in Duke Street, Lincoln's Inn, belonging to the Sardinian ambassador, and another in Warwick Street, belonging to the Bavarian ambassador. They then, partly owing to the appearance of the military, went home. It was thought afterwards that these attacks upon places of worship were intended as a blind to divert men's minds from any apprehension of the wider scheme of plunder and devastation which followed. The authorities, indeed, made very light of the riots up to this point; even Lord Mansfield spoke of it as quite a slight irregularity. He was soon to find out with what serious excesses it was pregnant.

On Saturday the mob did little ; but what little they did was quite unhindered by the law. They trifled with a few Popish chapels and dwelling-houses, but apparently in expectation that the magistrates *must* do something soon, refrained from any larger enterprises. Discovering at last, however, that they were really masters of the town, they proceeded to exercise their power on a more extended scale. On Sunday they burnt the chapel in Moor Fields. On Monday they destroyed the house of Sir George Savile ; and on the following Tuesday and Wednesday all that havoc was committed which has made the Gordon riots historical. But all this is now an old story. The burning of Lord Mansfield's house in Bloomsbury Square, with his valuable library and MSS. ; of Newgate, the King's Bench, the Fleet, and other prisons whose inmates hastened to swell the tide of ruffianism which everywhere flooded the metropolis : the destruction of Mr. Langdale's distillery in Holborn, and the spectacle of miserable half-burnt wretches gulping down spirits out of pails, or even sucking them up out of the gutters ; the attack on the Bank, which was repelled by no less a personage than John Wilkes ; the prominent figure of the mob leader mounted on a huge dray-horse, who has been turned to such good account by Mr. Dickens ; and finally, " last scene of all," the heavy, sullen roar of sustained musketry which announced that the troops had at last begun to act : all these things have been described too often by more skilful pens than ours to warrant our dwelling on them now. The Government seemed paralysed ; but the truth is, that Ministers remembered what had occurred in 1768, when Lord Barington had provoked such a storm of indignation by the encouragement he had given to the military ; and the Secretary of State was actually in such a frenzy of alarm that he caused his servants to wear blue cockades. The officers likewise remembered the coroners' inquests of 1768, and positively refused to interfere, even when pillage and incendiarism was going on before their eyes, unless the Riot Act was first read by a civil magistrate. A company of the Guards stood idly by during the destruction of Lord Mansfield's house ; and when a magistrate was at length found to read the Riot Act, only a few women and children remained to be fired on. The Lord Mayor behaved with culpable remissness, and a rather warm correspondence ensued between his lordship and the Home Office. It was not until the Wednesday night that, finding all other means fail, the King at length took the law into his own hands ; and, after consulting the Attorney-General, caused it to be notified to the troops, that " in obedience to an order from the King in council, the military were to act without waiting for directions from the civil magistrate." This decisive step put a stop to the rioters at once. On Thursday all was tranquil ; and on Friday Lord George Gordon was arrested. For nearly one entire week the mob had been in possession of London, and it is wonderful, when we come to reflect upon it, that the outrages committed were no worse. Above all, it is remarkable that no offences are recorded against women. Lord Eldon, indeed, tells us that his wife was

stripped of her hat and neckerchief as he was taking her to the Temple for safety. And one man was hanged for cutting his wife's head off with a saw, because she came home in liquor, with a blue riband in her bonnet, hiccupping "No Popery." But then this was on the side of order. Nearly three hundred persons lost their lives in the streets, and the slaughter would probably have been much greater had not Government prohibited private persons from carrying fire-arms. The students in the Temple prepared to join the soldiers who were quartered there, but the commanding officer, as they were going out in the morning, shut the door in their faces, and ordered it to be instantly locked, saying that he did not want to have his own men shot. For participation in the riot, 135 prisoners were tried, 59 were convicted, and 21 were hanged. The leader, who was brought to trial in the following February, was acquitted on a technical point; but he died after all in Newgate, imprisoned on a charge of libel, in the year 1793.

The Gordon riots were in one respect an exception to the rule we have laid down with regard to eighteenth-century mobs. Though headed by an aristocrat, they were not fomented by either of the two rival parties of the aristocracy. Had the Government acted with becoming vigour at the outset, the Gordon riots would have formed no part of English history. All ranks and parties alike united in condemning, not only the excesses of the mob, but the principle on which they acted. Thus we see that neither the general good sense of the nation, nor even the moderation and discipline which mobs may exhibit in the beginning, are any guarantee against the most fearful disorders if the agitation is permitted to continue. In other words, a mob is by its nature always gravitating towards a riot; and if not checked in time, must as certainly come to that end, as unlimited drinking to drunkenness, or unlimited drunkenness to madness.

The Gordon riots were the last of those which had the effect of fairly paralysing Government. The remembrance of them was still fresh in men's minds when the French Revolution broke out, pointing the moral as it seemed of all popular disturbances, and consolidating the reminiscences of the last twenty years into a permanent principle. Henceforth, although a very small section of the Whig party did continue to lend a kind of moral sanction to the seditious agitations of the period, the great bulk of the nation repudiated the employment of mobs as edge-tools dangerous to play with; and it was not till nearly forty years had elapsed that the English mob regained anything of its pristine glory. An attempt was made in 1795 to resuscitate the reign of mob-law which half a century sooner might have been attended with serious consequences. The "Corresponding Society," as it was called, convened a great meeting in Copenhagen Fields, where 150,000 persons assembled, and an address to the King was voted praying for reform in Parliament, the dismissal of Ministers, and peace with France. A few days after this meeting the King went in state to open Parliament. His carriage was surrounded by a mob and one of the windows was broken by a small bullet. On his

return he was still followed by the crowd, who threatened to pull him out of his carriage, which, it is thought, they would have done but for the timely arrival of the Guards. But still the moral effect of this mob was absolutely nothing except in so far as it stimulated the friends of order. Out of sympathy with the nation at large, and unsupported by any aristocratic party of any weight in the country, the mob was powerless. The only result of their behaviour was that two Bills, called the "Treason Bill" and the "Sedition Bill" were passed through Parliament by overwhelming majorities, and though they were never put in force, the evidence which they supplied of the strength and determination of Government cowed the leaders of agitation, and caused it gradually to wither.

Before we quit the eighteenth century we must notice the famous Birmingham riots, where the mob, as if to show their impartiality towards sectaries of all denominations, proceeded to cap the doings of the Gordon rioters by a like display of rancour towards the Dissenters. The origin of the disturbance was a sermon preached by Dr. Priestly, a Unitarian, in which he upheld what had then come to be called "French principles." While the people were still in a state of much irritation at this discourse, notice was given that the Unitarian Society intended to celebrate the anniversary of the destruction of the Bastile by a public festival and dinner, to be held at one of the chief hotels. Popular feeling rose so high at this announcement that the more prudent of the propagandists declined to attend the celebration. About eighty, however, did assemble on the 14th of July (1791); but were soon surrounded by an immense mob who shouted "Church and King" with much ferocity of demeanour till the company separated. They then proceeded to reward themselves for their own loyalty by demolishing Dr. Priestly's house, which contained a valuable laboratory and library. From this they went on to other acts of violence of the like kind, and even made raids into the country, where they burned or ransacked several gentlemen's houses. They had their own way entirely from Thursday to Sunday, and committed damage for which the sufferers recovered about thirty thousand pounds from their respective hundreds. It was said that they were encouraged by the clergy and at least winked at by the magistrates. But this we must presume to be a calumny. Only three of the rioters were hung, but great numbers perished in the flames.

We now take a great leap into almost a new world, passing over nearly a quarter of a century before mobs again become formidable. It was not till after the peace, when invasion had ceased to have any terrors for us, and the exultation of victory was forgotten in the distress which prevailed among the people, that political agitation revived. The source of this distress we are not called upon to explain; that it existed is a well-known fact; and that the enactment of the Corn Laws about the same time formed a useful weapon in the hands of agitators, is equally notorious. From 1816 to 1820, London was honeycombed with conspiracies, none of them perhaps very formidable, but the mere consciousness of which was harassing and irrita-

ting to Government. The Luddites were still active in the manufacturing districts. The agricultural labourers rose in gangs, burning ricks, destroying shops in the country towns, and keeping even the most retired parts of the country in constant trepidation and anxiety. A number of associations called Hampden clubs were formed at this period for the purpose partly, or at least ostensibly, of diverting the people from these outrages by organizing a peaceable agitation in favour of Parliamentary Reform. They did to some extent succeed in diverting popular indignation from one class of offenders to another; from butchers and bakers and machine-owners, to parliamentary borough-mongers. But they did not do much towards making the people more peaceable. Large public meetings now began to be held all over the kingdom, and the "demagogue" rose again into such importance as he had not enjoyed since the days of "Jack Wilkes." Gentlemen again took up the part, and the mob again became formidable. In December, 1816, there was a serious riot in the City, which was nipped in the bud by the firmness of the Lord Mayor and City magistrates. But all these things were but preludes to the great meeting at Manchester, in 1819, when ensued what is commonly known to the public as the "Peterloo Massacre," but which was attended in reality by rather less bloodshed than might reasonably have been apprehended beforehand. On the 12th of July a monster meeting was held at Birmingham (then, as our readers know, unrepresented), when Sir Charles Wolsely, of Wolsely Park in Staffordshire, and descended of a very ancient county family, was elected Member for the town. He had told his audience at a previous meeting at Stockport that he had taken part in the storming of the Bastille, and that what he had done for France he would not hesitate to do for his own country. Sir Charles was arrested for this speech shortly after his "election," at his house in Staffordshire. But the people of Manchester, fired by the example of their brethren at Birmingham, resolved to have a Member too, and pitched upon Orator Hunt as their representative. A meeting was announced for Monday, the 9th of August, for the purpose of formally electing him, to be held on an open space of ground near St. Peter's Church. The magistrates forbade the meeting, and gave notice to all loyal and peaceable subjects to abstain from attending it. The Reformers then begged that the authorities would themselves convene a meeting where the question of Parliamentary Reform might be discussed. This request they, not perhaps unnaturally, declined; and it was immediately notified that the original meeting would be held. It assembled accordingly to the number of about eighty thousand with flags and bands of music. The magistrates had come to the decision not to prevent the meeting but only to arrest the ringleaders. They had at hand about two hundred special constables, forty of the Manchester yeomanry, the 15th Hussars, part of the 31st and 88th Regiments of Foot, and four hundred of the Cheshire yeomanry. The chief constable, when he received his warrant, said that it was impossible for him to execute it without military assistance. The Manchester yeomanry were then ordered

to break through the mob, and penetrate to the spot where Hunt and his associates stood. But the command was more easily given than obeyed. The soldiers did not attempt a regular charge, but more humanely endeavoured to push their horses through the mass, without using their arms. The result may be imagined. They got separated from each other, and firmly wedged in among the mob, unable either to advance or retreat. At this moment, and when the mob was beginning to pull some of them off their horses, the 15th Hussars came up, and received orders from Mr. Hulton, one of the magistrates, to disperse the crowd and rescue the yeomanry. This was the work of only a few minutes; the ground was soon cleared, and Hunt and ten others were arrested. Of course, no affair of this kind could take place without a good many people being hurt. Between three and four hundred are said to have been injured on this occasion. But the cases of sabre wounds were not more than twenty or thirty, while the lives lost were actually not more than six, one of these being a special constable, and the other a yeoman, who was knocked off his horse by a brickbat. The collision took place in August during the parliamentary recess; and it is rather remarkable that when Parliament assembled again in the following November, comparatively little was said upon the subject in either House. In fact, the circumstances of the case had been much exaggerated; and as the popular leaders in the legislature had been able during the vacation to make inquiries for themselves, they judged it more prudent, perhaps also more generous, to refrain from declamation.

It would be untrue to say that the agitation which culminated in "Peterloo" was followed by a reaction, but it was certainly followed by a period of comparative tranquillity. The repressive measures of a really strong Government did something; the horror with which the Cato Street Conspiracy inspired all classes of society did more. But what did more than all towards killing the popular excitement was the return of general prosperity which commenced soon after the accession of George IV. The question of Parliamentary Reform was allowed to go to sleep again, and Catholic Emancipation and the Slave Trade took its place in public estimation; on neither of these questions was democratic agitation possible.

We have to pass over a period of twelve years before we find the passions of 1819 again asserting themselves, or any English mob worth mentioning, in collision with the established authorities. The latter part of the autumn of 1831 was a terrible time for England. Early in October the Lords had rejected the Reform Bill by a majority of forty-one; and that vote was a signal for the whole populace of the country to rise. Riots took place in half the large towns of the kingdom, London included, where Lord Londonderry and the Duke of Cumberland were pulled off their horses, and the windows of the Dukes of Wellington and Newcastle were smashed to pieces. But Bristol and Nottingham were the chosen spots in which the mob once more reigned supreme, and re-enacted the scenes of 1780 almost to the letter. Sir Charles Wetherell was Recorder of Bristol,

and he had been one of the most violent opponents of the Reform Bill. Towards the end of October the time arrived at which the usual gaol delivery was to be held before him. Even many of his friends in Bristol, who understood the state of public feeling, thought it would be wise in him to postpone his visit. But Sir Charles himself and the more resolute of the Tory party deemed it unadvisable to betray any symptoms of timidity, and it was determined to proceed as usual. The results were frightful. Sir Charles made his entry into the city on the 29th, and with difficulty reached the Guildhall, where, amid the groans and hisses of a dense multitude, the commission was opened. With still greater difficulty did the Recorder make his way from the Guildhall to the Mansion House, where he was of course to dine with the Lord Mayor. But such a banquet was served up to him that night as must have haunted his dreams ever afterwards. The mob, vigorously but ineffectively opposed by the constabulary, smashed the windows and broke in the doors of the Mansion House, and forced its obnoxious guest, instead of sitting down to the dinner that was preparing for him, to make his escape as best he could over the roof of an adjoining house. The residence of the chief magistrate was ransacked, and among other booty falling into the hands of the mob was Sir Charles's own portmanteau, which, it was noticed at the time, though full of different kinds of wearing-apparel, contained *no braces*.* All this time the lower stories of the house had been laid completely bare to the gaze of the outsiders, who saw through the broken windows, and gaping doors, the whole paraphernalia of the kitchen arranged as for a grand banquet. Joints of meat were seen hung upon the spits, saucepans simmering on the fire, game ready trussed upon the dressers, but the cooks had fled, the altars were deserted, even the cellars were left a prey to the thirsty multitude, who were not slow to avail themselves of the opportunity. Henceforth Bristol was for some days at the mercy of the mob, who drank, burned, and pillaged, right and left, without any serious interruption even from the military force, which was amply sufficient to have quelled the riot at any moment. The explanation of this disgraceful scene is almost word for word the explanation of the Gordon riots. Both the officers in command of the troops, and the magistrates in command of the officers, shrank from their duty. But it does appear that the major part of the blame rested on the shoulders of Colonel Brereton. In the first place, at the very commencement of the riot, he withdrew one half of his troops from the scene of action to give them refreshment; and the mob took advantage of his absence to gain the upper hand, which they maintained for several days afterwards. In the second place he insisted at a later period on being allowed to withdraw his men to a village two miles from Bristol, on the ground that they were not *safe* in the city. Thirdly, he several times refused to charge when ordered to do so by the magistrates, because, he said, his men were too

* An allusion to a well-known peculiarity of the eccentric old lawyer.

fatigued. It seems beyond dispute that the most ordinary display of courage and firmness at the beginning would have crushed these riots in the cradle, as it would almost all the riots that have happened. But these qualities were unfortunately wanted; and what was still worse, they only returned when the mob was already exhausted, and respectable people began again to show themselves in the streets. Then the cavalry charged through the town, slashing on all sides without mercy or discrimination, and killing or maiming a considerable number of innocent and perhaps even friendly persons. An inquiry was instituted into the conduct of the military, the result of which was that it seemed likely that Colonel Brereton would be tried by a court-martial. The unfortunate officer, as is well known, destroyed himself a few days afterwards, to avoid the ordeal which he felt he could not face with credit. No one doubted his personal courage; but personal courage is scarcely the quality most in demand against a mob.

The Nottingham riots, which occurred about a fortnight earlier, were neither so serious nor of such long duration as those at Bristol. But they acquired an unhappy notoriety by two circumstances of more than ordinary interest which attended them. One was the destruction of Nottingham Castle, an ancient and splendid relic of past ages, then the property of the Duke of Newcastle, which possibly suggested to Mr. Disraeli his vivid picture of the burning of Mowbray Castle in *Sybil*. The other, and one sufficient by itself to make the memory of these riots execrable for all time, was the death of Mrs. Musters, Lord Byron's "Mary," whose home at Colwick Hall was attacked by the mob, during the absence of her husband. She took refuge, with her daughter, in the shrubberies on a cold wet autumn night, and between the combined effects of fright and cold she died only a few weeks afterwards. The rioters extended their ravages for many miles round Nottingham, and some even penetrated to Loughborough, a market-town within the borders of Leicestershire. The present writer has often heard from relatives of his own, who were staying near Loughborough at the time, the terror they underwent on that memorable night, in a lonely country-house, with none but ladies for the garrison.

With the riots of 1891 this brief sketch of English mobs may be properly concluded. The affair of 1848 was a meeting that was likely to become a mob, but in point of fact it never did, and it would be foreign to our purpose to dwell merely on possibilities. The riots of last year are too recent to be discussed without suspicion of a political bias, which it is our express purpose to avoid. The experience of a hundred and fifty years teaches us two things, that we never need fear the mob when the better classes, and those set in authority over them, are true to themselves; and, secondly, that the slightest want of energy, the most venial error of judgment, or the briefest relaxation of vigilance, may be fraught with all the horrors which London underwent in 1780, and Bristol in 1831.

Stone Edge.

CHAPTER V.

NATHAN THE WISE.



NATHAN'S little square red tea-caddy of a house had been built on—most inharmoniously—to an old stone cottage covered with ivy. In the smart new room in front was a smart green door, with a brass knocker, only opened once or twice in the year in times of great ceremony, and on these occasions it stuck fast, and creaked and screeched and groaned as if it resented the indignity of so fine a piece of show being required to do any work. Alongside the door that never opened was the hospitable door which was never shut, except in the coldest weather; and at it now stood the old couple. Mrs. Broom's

face was radiant with smiles, and though Nathan's welcome was quieter, it was not the least hearty.

"Well for sure, yer haven't lost time, yer two childer," cried he, laughing. "If I iver see folk in such a hurry. And my missis here as thowt she might bring yer together, and mix and sweeten to her taste, like as if it were a pudden."

"Dear heart o' me, Nathan," said his wife, "as if I were niver content so I hadn't a finger i' th' pie. It mak's me young again for to see yer two. God bless ye both," added the affectionate old woman, with tears in her eyes, as she dragged Cassie into the room upstairs by way of taking off her bonnet. She set her in a chair, and took the blushing face between her hands and gave it a hearty kiss.

"Yer cheeks is like a red rose, child," she said. "Now tell me all about it."

But all she could get out of her was, "Oh, auntie, I am so happy, and it's all along o' you; if ye hadna got me here, I should niver ha' lighted upo' Roland. How could he think o' me?"

" Bless ye, child, ye munna spoil him wi' thinkin' such a deal o' him ! He's a pretty middlin' lad as men goes ; but thee'st worth three o' him—a sight too good for such as he. I niver let on to Nathan how much account I makes o' him ; 'tain't good for men."

But in spite of this stoical view of his claims, she petted Roland for the rest of the evening with all her heart. The old people did most of the talking, however, themselves. Cassie sat in a corner of the room, silent and quiet in her happiness. Roland was a little more excited, but answered Nathan's jokes a good deal at random. They both, however, agreed in expecting that sudden illumination in the authorities which all lovers in such cases believe must immediately take place : the change in the oldest and most cherished opinions, the vanishing of the most obstinate prejudices in their favour. A new light has shone on their lives, and they cannot conceive how it can fail to enlighten every one else around them. Nathan shook his head at them warningly.

" Well, ye'r bold and hopeful for to go dead agin two such as Joshuay and German Ashford, and think they're to dance to yer piping, and mak' friends at your bidding, and a' that, to be sure ! "

" Eh but, Nathan," said his wife, " they dunno want 'um to dance ; ony to shake hands and giv' um their own way, poor things."

" I mun be going," said Roland at last ; " feyther'll be home by now. He's out to-night at a club-feast. He's none for taking too much as some does ; but he's thowt very good company is feyther," added he, with a sort of pride.

" Well, 'tis wonderful to hear good and Joshuay joined together in one word," observed Mrs. Broom to herself in a loud whisper, not intended for society or necessary for Roland to remark on.

" I wish ye kindly good-night," said he, as he drew Cassie out on the little grass-plot shut in by a high row of hollies, that there might be no more inconvenient witnesses of their parting than the moon and stars, which, as the Irish song says, " were shining brightly, 'cause they'd nothing else to do." There were bright dots of light on the glistening leaves of the hollies and ivy, almost as brilliant as the stars themselves, so that the sky above and the earth beneath seemed to be sparkling with jewels : sweet scents seemed to rise on all sides from sweetbriar and jessamine and southernwood and thyme ; the murmur in the still air of a stream dashing among the stones far away at the foot of the hill seemed to add to the quiet hush of the night ; a magnificent " harvest-moon " was rising over the mountain in front of them, looking so large and near that it seemed to touch the hill-side itself. In the extreme stillness of the outside world they seemed first to realize the troubles and difficulties of the path before them.

" I wunna speak to feyther to-night," said Roland ; " I'd mebbe best let it stan' over till to-morro' i' th' afternoon. He's mostly riled at market-time ; we'll let it be till arter his bargains is made." And then, as a sudden qualm came over him as to the small foundation there might be

for his "Spanish castles"—"Come nigh to me, come nigh to me, Cassie," said he, drawing her closer. "Whaiver will I do without thee an my feyther an' thine will na hear reason?"

"Well-a-day," answered she, "we'd ha' to bide mebbe a long while; but there's worse things nor waitin', Roland, for true hearts as trusts one another." And her face in the moonlight looked the very ideal of trust and hope.

"Ah! but thou wilt na want me as I shall thee," said he, a little jealously.

"Dost thou think not?" answered she, with a smile. "Womenfolk bides at home and remembers, most times. Menfolk goes about and forgets!"

The next morning, as the excitement in Cassie's mind went off, the light of her joy grew dim, and the fear of her father became stronger.

"Lyddy said as you'd a promised to speak up for us to feyther an it were wanted, aunt Bessie," said she, anxiously. "Can't yer get him here?"

"Surely, surely, child, your uncle Nathan will tackle him; he's a vara powerful man i' speech is Nathan," said the old wife, with much pride. "There's not a many like him: folks comes fro' all sides for to ask counsel o' him, and orders themselves accordingly."

Mrs. Broom had a profound respect for her husband's wisdom. "My master says so and so," was, in her eyes, a final appeal for other people; in her own concerns, she preserved a liberal right of private judgment. But against stupidity even the gods themselves, says Schiller, fight in vain; even the wisest man may be worsted without ignominy in a struggle with the main force of brute obstinacy. In theory, it may be easy to reason with a bull as you shake a red rag in his face, but in practice the bull has the best of it; and Ashford was a very perfect specimen of the race. Therefore, though Nathan entered on the operation with the greatest circumspection, beguiled the old farmer from the market when his work was done, to have some ale, and did not begin on the negotiation till the glass was fairly in his hand, it was not of the smallest use.

"I were thinking what a good job 'twere," Nathan began, clearing his throat, "if Cassie and Roland Stracey was to come together. They say Joshuay's saved a good bit o' money, and it stanns to reason Roland will hae it all."

Ashford looked up slowly: it was some time before such an idea could at all enter his head. "The son o' yon scoundrelly cheating rogue!" he almost screamed, when at last he took it in. "I'll hear none o' such spoke in my house: d'ye hear, Nathan?" And he rose instantly and turned hastily towards the door, contriving, however, to finish his glass of ale as if in a fit of absence. "I'll ha' Cassie to come back wi' me," he went on, angrily.

"I wunna leave the girl owt o' my money an ye serve her so," said Mrs. Broom, kindling, and unable to resist striking in. "If ye'll let her

wed wi' Roland, she shall ha' the pounds an' welcome ; but if not, she shanna ha' a penny on't."

"Ye may do yer best or yer worst wi' it," answered Ashford, in a rage. "Tain't yourn at all by rights, an' you knows it; an' anyhow, I'll do what I choose wi' my own child."

"You used her mother shameful; and now yer all one as bad to the girl," cried the old woman, hotly.

"Cassie," shouted her father fiercely up the stairs, where he seemed to know by instinct that she had retreated, "come down d'recly; ye shanna stay an hour longer to larn such ill things as here. Get ready yer traps and come away, I say." And till she came he stood outside the house, fretting and fuming in spite of all Nathan's endeavours to pour oil on the troubled waters.

"What are ye whimpering for, yer silly wench?" said he, as they went off hurriedly. "Why, it's all for yer good. There's fifty better men, ay a hundred, nor that Roland Stracey in these parts."

"I want no better," said poor Cassie, in a low voice, humbly, after the example of Miranda.

Nathan looked after them in silence as they went away.

"Tell'ee what, he's like a mad bull when he's crossed is Ashford," said Mrs. Broom, rather apogetically, and not quite sure of the policy of her interference, as she leant her arms on her knees.

"Yes, my missis; but 'twere a pity to set up his back wi' bygones when thee wanted un so sore to do right by the young uns for time to come. Thou shouldst ha' smoothed un down wi' soft answers as turns wrath, instead o' flouting and rilin' o' him, an' rubbin' a' his hairs backards."

"Dear heart alive, and so I should! But thee seest the word allus slips out afore I've time to shut the door o' my lips upon 'um, as thee dost. And I dunna believe as it mattered," she ended, consolingly to herself. "Ye may wile the birds off the bushes wi' talk sooner nor ye'd drive Ashford where he wunna go. I've knowed him this five-and-twenty year, and never heerd on him doing nowt to please nobody."

The other encounter with the authorities did not pass off much more smoothly. Joshua was as much annoyed as Ashford himself, although not so violent.

"What, the daughter o' that auld fool German? A man as hasna got brass enough in's pouch, nor sense in's yead to keep hissen out of the workhouse," said he, when his son spoke to him.

"But, feyther, won't ye just come down and see her," answered Roland, gently, not knowing that she was already gone. "She will ha' some brass. Old Mrs. Broom's agoin' to leave her her mother's portion."

"I tak' no account o' thattins at all; them's ony words, and words is but wind. 'Old' Bessie Broom, as thee callest her, 's younger nor me, and she may live years and years; and more by token she may quarrel wi'

Ashford again, and tak' up wi' a' those nieces a' Nathan's and leave them her money. There's Martha Savage allus about the place wi' her sharp eyes. And I wunna hae thee marry wi'out money down, and there's an end on't."

Matters were beginning to look seriously with Joshua; he always trusted to his "luck," which had hitherto brought him through, but this time his affairs were turning queerly.

"Ye hanna suppered up thae five new heifers as I've bought," said his father. And about an hour after, before his son had nearly finished the work, he looked in again to the cattle-shed and observed: "Ashford hae a carried off his daughter home again frae her aunt's. And he were in a rare passion they said; so ye needn't be after her."

Roland sauntered disconsolately down the hill the next day, as soon as he could finish his work, to carry his woes to the old couple. He had hitherto had no idea of the strength of his father's enmities.

"I nivir giv' it a thought," said he, dolefully, "but my feyther's had a been fine and glad for her to come o'er our doorstane, once he'd a seen Cassie, and what a one she were for to make us happy and comfortable, and she so well-favoured too, like Ruth—tain't such a fine thing for to marry wi' me."

"Then thee wast but a fool, my lad, as to think thee feyther 'ud be so took up wi' a farrantly wench as a' that; auld stomachs ain't like young uns," said Nathan. "My word, I dunna deny as Cassie's a good and a pretty one, and steps as clean as e'er a fillie on 'um, but what's that to a man like Joshuay, as is no dour as a stone? Ill will is a sweet mossel to them as likes it, as they'll turn o'er and o'er again i' their mouths; and for aught I see when ye hae done wrong by a man, ye'r a deal more set agin him nor when ye hae been wronged. I dunna know the rights o' all that coil atwixt him and old German, and I wouldna say ill o' thee feyther to thee; but to them as knows Joshuay it stanns to reason (an' it mun be one or t'other) as he's a more like to cheat nor to be cheaten, my lad."

"But Cassie hasna cheaten nobody. She'd hae washed and mended him, and hae kep' the house and him cheerful and tidy too," said the lover—and he was an ardent one too. Indeed it may be questioned whether this list of qualities was not quite as agreeable and meritorious, and even as likely to promote their household bliss, as those which a Belgravian young lady brings to the common stock. "And we'd ha' loved one another wonderful too: dearly," he repeated to himself in an undertone, as if this part of the business were an extra, not necessary for the opinion concerning the marriage which Nathan was supposed to be adjusting.

"Well," answered the old man, "'whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and an ye light on a virtuous woman, her price is far above rubies,' says the wise Solomon. Seems they was scanty in them days, and I dunna see as they's much commoner now. 'A virtuous woman's a crown to her husband,' says he, and he were mighty petticklar too about 'um were

Solomon; and he know'd a vast about 'um too," he added parenthetically to himself as it were. "Therefore I'm none for discouraging thee, but thee mun wait, lad—thee mun wait—thee'st nowt but a lad yet."

"I'm twenty-three," said Roland, with some injured dignity.

"Eh! that's not much, my boy, I didna marry till I were nigh upon forty. There's time for a' things—

For patience is a virtue great,
Therefore we mun wi' patience wait."

"There thou'st got to thy proverbs agin! I believe my master thinks more o' King Solomon nor a' the rest o' the Bible put together fro' Genesis to Revelations, Kings, Lords, and Prophets put together," said Mrs. Broom, with some slight confusion between the constitution and the canon. She was not literary herself, and credited Solomon with much that would greatly have astonished that sage, particularly all the proverbs in prose and verse which ornamented her husband's discourse. "I dunna think as Solomon knowed much about women either," she went on, "for all he were so cliver. I doubt he'd but a bad lot to deal wi'—that Egyptian huzzie as had the temples and the high places and things."

"Well, I do think a deal on him," said Nathan, meditatively.

"You're very throng to-night. I mun wish you good evening," said poor Roland in a depressed tone, retiring less comforted by the prospect of possibly marrying Cassie by the time he was forty, than perhaps reason demanded, as the shrewd old woman perceived.

"And dunna ye take to heart so much what thoe wise men says about a' that waiting and sich like," said she. "Nathan nor Solomon's not young men, see thee." Mrs. Broom had the greatest possible pride in the extent of her husband's learning and wisdom, but thought it seemly to depreciate them slightly in public, both for "manners" and wholesome discipline to her great man's pride. "An yer true love and you's firm and faithful to each other, twill move mountains. 'Many waters will not quench love.' There's a proverb an he wants one. And ye'll come together, please God, afore long, an ye don't do ill that good may come. Afore you're forty," she added, with a smile.

The young man's face brightened; he turned suddenly and gave her a great hug in his gratitude.

"Nay, lad, fair and softly. I'm not Cassie," she said, laughing—

"No, but yo'r Cassie's aunt, and her aunt's mine too," he added triumphantly and defiantly as he went away.

CHAPTER VI.

SCIENTIFIC AND ANTIQUARIAN.

It was towards evening a few days after, and Cassie was feeding the chickens, and gazing absently at her father's retreating back as he passed out of the farm-yard, when she suddenly heard a low whistle, and saw

Roland in a dark corner of the cowshed opposite eagerly watching her. In another moment he had rushed out from his hiding-place, caught hold of her, drawn her in among the stacks, and was kissing her behind their friendly shelter.

"What a time it is sin' I have a see'd thee," said he; "but my feyther wouldna let me stir—he watches me like a cat does a moos. He lets me go a bit, and then's down wi' his foot on me happen I go a good yard out o'th' town. I shouldna ha' got here to year, but he sent me wi' a message to Amos Young, and I chanced on un at the turn o'th' road, and so nipped up the nob."

"My feyther's altogether as savage wi' thee and thine," answered she. "What would he do an he were to see thee here? He says thy feyther telled 'un as how there were a lass wi' money down to her portion, as he were a keepin' on wi' a long sight o' time back for thee," said Cassie, looking shyly and anxiously into his face.

Roland whistled incredulously. "I dunna know o' any lass as is a waitin' for me, but I know the lass as I'm a waitin' for," he went on, putting his arm round her.

"How long wilt thou wait, dearie?" said she, with a shy smile. "Thou'st not a good one at waiting at all, I take it. My feyther's back were scarce turned afore thou whistled—an he'd a come back where would we ha' been?"

"Dost thee wish I should be pleased to wait for thee? But I'd bided there a smattish while i' th' cowshed afore thou see'dst me;—a mortal long while," he repeated energetically.

"A cock's stride, as folks say," answered she, laughing, as she pointed to the big cock who had followed them among the corn-ricks. "It makes believe as it takes a long step, and 'tain't nothink at all! I take it thou'st but a make-believe too, Roland," said she, fondly, "when thou say'st an thee'll bide any time for me. Thou'lt forget me afore I shall thee, wi' all this coil o' troubles."

It took so long for Roland to rebut these calumnies and to prove his unalterable faith, that the gloaming fell, and he was obliged to leave her before the subject was half over.

"I havena said half o' what I'd a got to tell thee nayther," he ended, sorrowfully.

There was a light in Cassie's face as she came into the house that told only too plainly what had been taking place outside. Lydia shook her head lovingly at her.

"Thee must tell un not to come again, dearie. An thee feyther finds un he'll be that mad angry he'll half kill us all. Bid Roland bide awhile, till this storm-time be overpast. Mebbe thee aunt will do summut for him whiles, by nows and thens."

As Roland came out of the farmyard gate, with eyes in the back of his head instead of in front, he fell full upon old Ashford, who had returned home earlier than usual. The height to which the untamed

passions of those who habitually yield to them can reach, the effect of irresponsible power and unchecked temper in secluded places where public opinion does not come, is something terrible. When men live in communities they are forced to give and take, and education and civilization, though they do not do much for us, teach us at least to restrain, or at the worst disguise their violence. The horror inspired by the deeds of the feudal lords in France show to what this sometimes amounted. The wild-beast state of fury to which Henry VIII. was said occasionally to have been roused, has few modern equivalents; though there was a great official not long ago who has been seen to sweep the table-cover of a drawing-room on to the floor, breaking and destroying its miscellaneous contents, in a fit of rage, at one fell swoop.

Ashford's fury was fearful to witness. After venting his passion upon Roland, he turned into the house, knocking down the chairs as he passed, upsetting the tea-table in his blind rage, and striking at the women, who slunk terrified away. "Oh, master, remember the baby," said poor Lydia, pitifully, but the appeal only seemed to add fuel to the flame; while Roland, who felt that his ill-timed visit was the cause of all, hovered round the door, not daring to go in, lest it should aggravate matters. The noise at last brought up German.

"Is there nowt to be done to bring him out?" said Roland, seizing him by the arm in a great state of agitation. "Hearken, it's all one as if he were mad."

"Turn the pigs into the potatoes, or the barley mead's best,—it ain't sheared yet," said German, readily. "I've only just shut to the gate. Feyther left it open, and the pigs is a' in the lane handy." And while Roland ran off to make good the fact, German walked in at the door and said, without raising his voice—

"Feyther, the pigs is in the barley mead, a doin' no end o' damage, and I canna get 'um out wi'out you."

The first effect of the interruption was only to divert the stream of wrath on German's head; but in a few minutes the old man hurried off, and the excitement and fatigue of the pig-hunt created such a diversion, that when he came back out of breath it was just possible for Lydia to make him understand that the crime should not happen again, though his savage ill-humour for the rest of the evening made all communication like walking on live coals.

The next day he was "down" in a tremendous fit of rheumatic gout. Whether the fit of passion brought on illness, or the illness the passion, the women had a hard time of it, and his temper was terrible to bear. They hardly knew what to do with him, when one evening old Nanny the carrier came in at the door. Nanny Elmes was an important institution. Outwardly she was only a hale, wiry little old woman, who carried about a basket containing tapes, buttons, needles and pins, and such small ware; but in fact the functions of post-office, electric telegraph, railroad and shop, culminated in her. As writing was a rare accomplish-

ment, communication was chiefly verbal in the district, and generally passed through Nanny, who never forgot or mistook anything. But then she had the great advantage of not being able to read and write: and what says Plato? "Write nothing, for what has once been written is sure to disappear from the memory." And Mrs. Elmes (no mean authority) agreed entirely with Plato, and always held up to scorn "them as trusted to their finner-ends ithstead of to their brains." I wish among the scores of essays on the "advantages of education" some one would write on the evils attached to reading and writing: how memory decays and independent thought diminishes under its baneful influences. The difficulties and expense of writing with a waxen tablet and a style, or whatever Mr. Grote may settle was the custom, must have prevented most Greeks from infringing Plato's precept; and the population generally of Athens evidently trusted to talk for their information, and memory for its retention: yet no one ever denied the intelligence and high culture of that sharp-witted people. Nanny Elmes was so far like an old Greek (a Rhapsodist shall we say?) that her memory seemed able to contain anything she gave it to keep, and that she went from house to house, always welcome to her bite and sup, and a warm greeting besides, bearing to all who chose, in a poetical though not perhaps exactly rhythmical form, the news of the district, the "hauts faits" of the community. How Tommy Young, working at a mine of his own sinking in the "king's field"* of the mountain opposite, had smoked out Sammy Goodale, who had been brought "to grass" for dead; the said Tommy having suspected Sammy of hitting on his own particular vein of lead ore, and after all "it were only a working of the old man;" the mysterious miner of the ancient times. How the quarrymen had set fire to a "blast" a bit too soon, and poor Willy, who was weakly, would surely have been killed, an his uncle hadn't rushed forward and dragged him out, though his own leg were broken by a big stone. And these things are much more graphic as given by word of mouth, with look and gesture, than in cold print. Nanny was also esteemed as wise in all ways, therefore the women rejoiced greatly to see her.

"Eh, Nanny," said Lydia, "but ye're welcome as flowers in May! Where ha' ye been this ever so long? Here's the master so bad he canna hardly stir; wunnot ye think o' summat to do him good?"

"For what dunno yo try a charm, Master Ashford?" said old Nanny, setting down her basket and standing with arms a-kimbo in a determined way opposite him; "they're fine things whiles. I tried one when my Johnny were sick with th' chin- [whooping] cough, as they telled me of. He were to be set backards of a donkey and to ride nine times round an ash-tree, and a did un a deal o' good."

"But I thowt Johnny died o' th' chincough," said Lydia, humbly and anxiously; with no touch of scorn, but an earnest desire to ascertain her

* King's field is ground where every man may dig a mine at his pleasure, without any appeal from the miserable proprietor of the upper soil.

facts before she entered on the interpretation of the law of this peculiar mode of medicine.

"Ay, he died for sure, but they said 'twere because I couldna get the ass up till mebbe a week afore he were taken. Anyhow, all the while he were ridin' 'twere wonderful how quiet the cough were."

"But I hanna got the chincough," said Ashford, sulkily.

"Nay, but there's charms and charms. Some folks thinks a deal o' a necklace of coins fro' the communion money, but I arena much for that," answered Nanny, who was a staunch Dissenter with a touch of pride. "It may be all very well for Church folk, but them as is brought up i' the light o' truth don't hold by such ways."

"I wonna be worrited nayther by physics nor charms," growled the old man, doggedly. "Where hae ye bin to all this while? tell me summat."

"I've been up i' th' Dales to Stoney Tracey. I allus goes there by nows and thens. Flour's up again, I heerd say," said Nanny, as the boy German came in with a sack on his head; "sure it's an uncommon price. Ye mun tak' heed to the Hobbthursts."

"What's them?" inquired German, with much interest, as he came up behind her, hoping for a "tale," while Cassandra turned round from washing her pans to hear; and even Lydia paused in her spinning to listen.

"Hast thee niver heerd," said the old woman, "o' the big boggat as robs the mills up i' th' Dales, for a' the doors be safe locked?"

"And how does he get in?" asked the boy, with round open eyes peering eagerly into the old woman's face.

"They say giant Hobb hath ever a little un alongside o' him, a dwarf like, as he puts through the window o' th' mill to tak' the meal. And the butter, too, ain't safe; but how that mid be I canna say, for they're all 'fraid to look out when he comes."

"Nay," said old Ashford, "I wunna ha' my lad telled such a pack o' nonsense tales a' thattens, a' kippin' him frae his work. There ain't no such things in nature, not a bit. And the Hobb niver was knowed to come beyond the Dale," he added, conclusively in authority if not in reasoning.

"Well," replied the woman, "anyhow there's Squire Rivers been a pokin' and a diggin' into things as he'd better leave alone. I doubt the Hobb will be arter *his* meal anyways. He's been into the cavern they ca' Ludechurch, and t'other hole, where the Hobb has his lodging they allus say."

"Dear heart, what fools there do be in th' world," said Ashford, oracularly. "There were a queer little fella wi' spectacles on's nose, as comed here speerin' questions up and down, mebbe a twelvemonth back. 'And what's them figures upo' th' house?' says he. 'I dunna know,' says I. 'I beant booklearned'—short like, to ha' done wi' un. 'And how do ye ca' this, and what do ye ca' t'other?' he goes on, none daunted. 'And what's the name o' yon little hill nigh there?' 'Lose Hill,' says I. 'And that other t'other?'

"Ah, that'll be Win Hill he'd mean," said Nanny, much interested.

"'Yes,' says he. 'I've a heerd tell o' that. There were a big battle here atwixt the Danes and them as were o' th' country-side. And an this be Lose Hill, where were the folks buried as were killed i' th' fight? What's yon mound?' he says, peering wi' his head o' one side, and his sharp eyes and barnacles. 'What, thattens? do ye mean Deddun's Mead?' says I. 'That's it,' he goes on. 'Dead Man's Mead' (as if he know'd a deal more o' it nor I, as had lived on it man and boy all my days). 'Ha' ye never digged nor found anything i' th' 'lowe?'" 'What would there be? Gold, man?' I cum down sharp on 'im. 'Nay, friend, nowt but dead men's bones, and pikeheads, and cracked jugs mebbe,'" he says.

"And what for should ye fash yersen wi' thattens, I wonder?" put in Nanny.

"Well and that's just what I says to un. 'I want na bones, nor cracked jugs; there's enouch o' them, and porringers too, i' th' house, wi' a' the lads and lasses break!' Wi' that he laughed right out—ye could ha' heerd him right over the hill. 'Mebbe ye'r in the right there, my man; they wouldn't be o' much account to you!' and a looked so queer out o' his eyes; and I heerd arter as it mun ha' been Squire Rivers from that side country! Well-a-day, what maggots them quality does tak' up wi'; eos they hasn't nowt else to do I take it! But if I'd ha' know'd it were the old squire I wouldna ha' made so free.

"Well, ye'd the best on him about the jugs anyhow," said Nanny, cheerfully.

"Ay, that had I; hadn't I?" repeated the old man, much pleased. "I tuk the change out on him there, I did."

After all, Nanny *had* brought a charm with her, and approved herself a good leech. Ashford improved from that time. She had amused him, and listened to and admired him, two of the best sedatives known in any pharmacopeia.

CHAPTER VII.

FERN-CUTTING ON THE DRUID'S HILL.

It was a beautiful day late in October about a month after. "German," said his father, coming wearily into the house, "we mun ha' more bracken cut for fodder down i' th' Parson's Lot. Ye mun go down to-day, or it'll be too wet. I do b'leeve there ain't the kip o' a single heifer upo' the whole lot. I mun get what I can out of it. I wera a fool to promise thretty shillin' a year for't,—the meresmen said as how it werena much above three acre. The old mare can git with the cart as far as the gate. I canna go, and Cassie'd better go i' th' stead to help thee."

German knew that it was much too late in the season for cutting bracken, but nothing was ever done in time at Stone Edge; and he and his sister took their sickles in silence and went down as they were desired.

Nothing, in fact, could be less remunerative or more beautiful than the ground in question. It lay some distance from the farm, where the shelter of the warmer valley began. The steep hill-side was clothed with sweeps of wood, amongst which the grey piles of rock appeared; the soil was so shallow indeed, and so broken with stones, that one wondered how the tall trees found nourishment of any kind. Here and there were open spaces covered with heather and bracken, which in this autumn time had ripened to a russet brown, diversified with brilliant yellow and green patches of rushy grass, rich in colour beyond description. Slender white birch-stems and pendent mountain-ash hung with a wreath of scarlet berries, grew in groups here and there. A strip of this unprofitable beauty had been allotted to the parson in some primitive distribution of the unenclosed soil; and a scraggy heifer or two belonging to Ashford now gained a scanty living on it, with an immense amount of toil. It was chiefly valuable to him for the fern, which saved straw, and German always rather enjoyed the expedition. Any change is pleasant to a boy, even to a hill-side a mile off; and he drove his old mare down the hill, with his sister by his side, shaken to pieces, but both very merry. German unharnessed the mare and tied her up, and Cassie wandered on with her sickle in hand. Over all passed the shadows of the great fleecy clouds overhead, which sailed across the blue sky, throwing a changing shade here and there over the woods and hills, making the sunlit portions still more lovely in their autumn dress. Presently she thought she heard voices in the little grassy lane, which ran on the other side of the small stream at the bottom of the hill, and she leaned against the ruined wall, overspread with ivy and beautiful creeping plants, and hidden in a covert of honeysuckle and fern. Presently three men came out of a field on the other side of the lane. Joshua was warmly debating the value of a horse, which he had just been trying, with its master, the miller.

"I tell ye the nag's ten year old an she's a day. She ayn't worth five pounds," shouted he.

"She's worth more nor any horse you ever had," retorted the miller. "You might ride her to Youcliffe without her turning a hair."

Roland, little interested, stood holding his father's horse and his own, and looking sadly up the valley which led to Stone Edge—so intently, that Cassie felt sure he would miss seeing her, and yet by moving she was afraid of drawing his father's attention. At last his eyes caught sight of German in the fern high up on the hill, and came eagerly down in search of her. There was a small close and a tolerably wide brook, and the wall on the bank be'ween them, across which they stood looking at each other. His father and the miller went on gesticulating and arguing within a couple of yards of him, screaming, swearing, appealing, defending, while Roland, half hidden by the horses, gazed across the intervening space, and sadly said most eloquent things in that unvoiced conversation; and Cassie from her covert, masked by fern, under the changing shadows of the birch and mountain-ash, answered him again in the same language.

At length Joshua, in the necessary passion, all in the way of business, turned suddenly round, seized his horse's bridle out of his son's hand, and rode off saying, "Come, Roland, I'll none waste *my* time with such roundings."

He was very sharp-eyed was Joshua, but a bargain is a bargain and an absorbing occupation, and he was watching the changes on the miller's face, not the unprofitable quivering of mountain-ashes. Luckily the miller's last words were long. "We'll halve the difference. You'll think on it again," was thrown backward and forward fiercely. Roland could not leave Cassie thus without a word. He took his chance, passed his horse's bridle under a stone on the wall, vaulted it, leaped at the brook, stumbled on the muddy bank and slipped with one leg into the water, sprang up the other side, and seized her by the hands with the greatest difficulty as he clung on to the wall.

"Oh, Roland!" said she, bending down from her high estate, and looking like a Druid priestess with her sickle under the oak-tree. "Thee father will be just right down mad. Go off, my lad. Lyddy bid me tell thee thou mustna come again till thy feyther and mine agree."

He had no time for remonstrances. In another moment he had cleared the stream and the wall again, had leapt on his horse and followed his father, carefully riding on the off-side of him to conceal his wet leg. Joshua was in high glee at getting the cob a few shillings cheaper than it was worth, and chatted on cheerfully to his son without perceiving his pre-occupation. Cassie stood listening to the sharp sound of the horses' tread on the limestone which followed the unseen line of road far down the valley, till at a bend in the hill-side it stopped suddenly, when she turned round with a sigh.

"Well, I niver!" said German, laughing, behind her, "And that sharp un, Joshuay, not to see a mössel o' it right under his very nose! We shanna get much bracken tho' at this rate. Thee mun help me to stack what I've got intil th' cart, or we shanna get home to-night."

The winter passed on and they never met again, while neither German nor Cassie were suffered to go down to their uncle's at Youcliffe.

One market-day, however, the old man's rheumatics were so bad that he summoned German to take the old mare and go down with a sample of oats in his stead.

"And I shall go and see my aunt," said the boy, stoutly. His father was grunting a refusal, but Lydia interposed, and his wrath was diverted on her devoted head.

"Feyther keeps her there argufying an it were 'er fault he's got a rick in's back," said German to his sister, who came with him to the door.

"Here's the kitling as she axed me for a long time back. How wilt thou carry it?" answered she.

"Gie it me in here," said German, opening his waistcoat, and the

kitten was dropped into rather dangerous proximity to his skin, but apparently quite satisfied with its situation.

"Thou'st main good, lad, to dumb beasts," observed Lydia, admiringly, who had come up. "'Tain't a many as 'ud dare to ha' a cat's claws so nigh their flesh."

"See Roland an thee canst, lad, and bring me word o' him," whispered Cassie in her brother's ear, as he mounted the long-legged beast with his burden before him.

"And get me twal shirt-button," cried Lydia as he rode away.

Having arrived at Youcliffe, put up his horse, and done his business, without seeing any signs of Roland, he betook himself to his aunt's, whom he found sitting jovial, cheerful, and red with heat, near a tremendous fire on a very hot day. In the abundance of coal in that district, it is thought bad manners and hospitality ever to let down the fire, however much suffering it may entail on oneself and one's friends.

"Well, German," said she, "and I'm very glad to see yer. Yes, I'm purely, thank ye, only I canna get shut o' the pean in my yead. By times it's enough to drive a dog mad."

"I've a brought the kitling, aunt, and it's a black one Cassie bid me say she had a chose," said he, as he drew forth the little woolly bundle and set it on a chair, where it stretched itself after its close packing, and contemplated existence in a grand way very deliberately.

"Dear heart alive, but it's a pretty un! They tell me it's good luck to bring a black cat to a house, but I dunna set great store by a' them things folks says."

"Thou'lt be fine and hungry, lad," said his uncle. "You young uns can eat your bellyful a many times over i' th' day. Thou'st nigh clemmed, I take it. The air's very strong and healthful at Stone Edge."

"Here's wheaten bread and cheese," said the old woman, "while I warm the bacon and broad beans left fra our dinner; there's nobbut a bilin' o' 'em left, I take it. And how's Cassie?" she inquired, standing over the boy and hospitably heaping the food on his plate. "I take it as very hard as I canna see her. One's own niece is a deal more to one nor one's husband's; leastways when hur's like Martha Savage."

"Thee niver canst abide Martha, my missis," said old Nathan, smiling.

"She've a tongue like a nutmeg grater, and she's as sharp as a ferret."

"There ain't a mossel o' harm in her," answered her husband; "but she do talk, there's no denying that."

"Talk!" replied Mrs. Broom, energetically. "She'd talk a horse's leg off! And she were the ugliest baby as ever I set eyes on," continued the old woman, in this rather miscellaneous catalogue of Mrs. Martha's crimes.

"'Fou' in the cradle, fair in the saddle,' they say, you know," said Nathan, laughing.

"Nay, there ye're quite out," answered his wife, triumphantly; "that saddle wunna fit, for she ain't fair, and she's never been upo' a horse's

back in her born days; but thou lovest them proverbs so as thou'lt fit 'um upo' a' heads."

German meantime was doing full justice even to his aunt's Benjamin portion of food, his mouth had hitherto been too busy for talk, but there is an end even to a boy's appetite.*

"Thank yer kindly, aunt, I'm full," he said at last, in answer to her renewed entreaties to eat, as he rose.

"And how's yer father?" she began. "He's very nasty-tempered. I've no patience wi' him for's ways. His head's as full o' maggots [fancies] as an egg is o' meat."

"Hush, wife," said Nathan, who took the side of the authorities. "Ye mustna say that afore his son. He's a bit westy by times is Ashford, that's a'. By'r Lady, is it!"—(the curious old Catholic oath of the district).*

"What, when he keeps Cassie mewed up wi' his tantrums, and won't so much as let her own aunt ha' the view on her! And here's my own sister's son as I ha' hardly set eyes on sin' he were growed up!"

"Besides," said Nathan the wise, "correction's good for childer." And he went on chaunting, in a grave sonorous voice,—

Solomon said, in accents mild,
Spare the rod and spile the child;
Be they man or be they maid,
Whip them and whallop them, Solomon said!

"I dunna see as man or maid either's the better for cuttin' in to," answered German, meditatively, as he put the finishing stroke to a stick-head which he was making for his uncle with his beloved new knife. "I ain't a bit of wood, as he should carve me into what fashion he fancies. Here's yer stick, uncle, and long health to use it, and I wish I was where the stick will be—along with yer."

"Thank ye kindly, my lad, and the same to you, and dunna ye be in too great a haste wi' your life. There be a deal o' pride i' th' world wants felling."

"I bean't a learnin' nothin'; it's just muddlin' and milkin' and wabblin' i' th' mud arter plough-tail. I'm like the little donkeys i' th' lane, I canna addle [earn] nought." The burgher blood from his mother was stirring curiously in the lad. "Roland would ha' learnt me to write and cipher, but feyther wouldn' let me nigh him. Well, good-by, uncle. I must go; the minits runs as fast as rats down here."

"I want ye for to go to Amos Young's, up your way, German," shouted his aunt after him, "and get me some pills. My inside's very tickle for to fettle, and I mun hae 'em from him."

"I'll go and welcome; but I didn't know as he'd a knowed owt o' doctoring," answered her nephew.

"No, but he's a very pious man," said Mrs. Broom, convincedly.

* "By'r lady shall she."—See Capulet: *Romeo and Juliet*.

As he went out of the door he fell upon Roland, rushing eagerly after him. "I can see Stone Edge from Win Hill above our close," said he, "for all there's two dales and three shoulders o' the hill betwixt us. Tell Cassie if she'd go up to 'the Stones' wi' you, and make a fire o' weeds, I should see the white smoke plain, and take it as a sign she ha'n't forgotten me. Tell her I shall go up every evening till I see it."

With which injunctions German rode home: prices for his father, buttons for his mother, and this primitive love-token for his sister.

Stone Edge overlooked the whole country. In one direction the Dale stretched far up to the purple moors in a pale distance. About it the mountains were tumbled into an extraordinary variety of peaks and shoulders, with precipitous valleys huddled in between, while beyond the long slow ugly ascent which lay behind rose other hills and valleys far and dim. On the extreme summit stood the stones of some great Druidical work, remnants of forgotten worship. Two great uprights still remained, and a rocking-stone. They must have been a most poetic-minded priesthood: their temples are placed in the finest situations for effect of natural scenery that can be chosen. Stonehenge, with its almost illimitable horizon of plain, with something of the same grandeur as the sea, the Cornish rocking-stone on its stern granite precipices, within hearing of the never-resting dash of waves, the Northern remains, are each perfect in its kind.

The Edge must have been seen far and near, and the signal-fires—which were no mean substitute for telegraphs—could have been transmitted from such a centre with almost electric rapidity. Still there were other hills near, apparently as good for this purpose, and nothing but the keenest sense of the majesty and grandeur which such a position would add to their ceremonies, could have induced men in those pathless mountains to spend so much labour as was required to raise such vast stones on such a spot,—the worship of the beauty of Nature, which we are now taught to think came into the world only with and since good roads and "convenient post-chaises" gave people leisure to look about. No doubt it was a different feeling from what prompts a young lady to put her head languidly out of a carriage-window and say, "Look, papa, what a pretty mountain!"

The old Druid probably believed in his everlasting hills with a deep reverence mixed with fear. The earth-god had been at strange work in his wrath here, he probably thought; and those scarred cliffs and rifted mountains were no pastime for a smoking, flirting, noisy, dragged pleasure-train as now; but the signs of an offended God, propitiated probably by some fearful rites on that solitary peak of "earth-o'-ergazing mountains." And there the young girl went up the next day and lit her signal-fire. The thin blue smoke curled outwards and away, and seemed to bear her thoughts with it. Even such communication, however, was a comfort to her, as she watched dreamily the answering beacon from the other hill.

CHAPTER VIII.

CROOKED WAYS.

"THE cranberries are ripe," said German one day to his sister.

"Be they?" said she. "Then I'll out and pick some, and send 'um to my aunt by Nanny Elmes."

Nothing can be more charming in the rare fine days of that rainy region than the upland moors in their unspoiled beauty. In July and August they are a gorgeous carpet of flowers—the dwarf yellow furze, mixed with three kinds of heather in their various purple gradations, making a perfect sea of bloom. Growing among these are rare vacciniums, with their lovely pink and white waxen bells, cranberries, whortleberries, blueberries, bilberries; while the red-leaved sundew, cotton-plant, and yellow asphodel, mixed with wonderful green mosses, cover the wetter spots. It is a rich garden for those who care, and for those who do not there is a fresh, soft, balmy lightness in the air, as if it were too delicious for Nature to give it in common use to her children, and she therefore kept it only for rare occasions and places difficult of access. Cassie was out on the cranberry moor very early in the next morning, and as she came and went among the flowers, not with any sentimental purposes towards them, but simply picking her "berries," she threw off her bonnet, and the delicate, bright, breezy-scented air made her young blood light within her heart, and she sang to herself as she went; the beautiful fresh young face looking even brighter than usual, for she felt as if all must come right.

The summer flower is to the summer sweet,
Though by itself it lives and dies unknown,

says one of the Shakspeare sonnets. I hope, therefore, that the summer enjoyed its human flower also, for there was no one else to do so, and it was a pity, for the sight was a very fair one. She turned home, having filled her little can and gathered moss to pack the fruit in, picking a bilberry here and there as she went, and putting it into her mouth as she smiled at the recollection of the many scrapes which she and German had got into on this very part of the moor—playing truant from work, their little mouths, blackened with the stains of the tell-tale bilberry, revealing their iniquities—when in the distance she saw Nanny Elmes coming up the green lane leading to the Old Hall.

It was so short a time since the old woman had been with them, that a cold chill of fear came over Cassie that something must have gone wrong, and she hurried forwards anxiously.

"Your uncle sends ye word, my lass, that your aunt ha' had a 'plexy stroke, and ye mun come down as fast as mid be an ye would see her alive. I were to ha' letted ye know last night, but I were so late, and I

darena come up the lone moor by night, for 'tis a very boggety bit," said Nanny.

Cassie gave a little cry; her flowery visions seemed to melt away as under a frost, and then her conscience reproached her that her next thought should be, not of her poor aunt, but the personal one that if she went to Youlcliffe she might see Roland again.

Ashford was sitting in the kitchen, much "put about" by the news, and therefore as obstinate as possible. He seemed to take pleasure in declaring that Cassie should not go, a sufficient number of times to prevent her thinking him too kind. And he probably would have held to it, but Nanny Elmes was an authority and came to the rescue.

"She's struck for death, and Cassie mun go quickly or she'll never see her again. Go and put on thee bonnet, child," said she, as if it were a matter of course—which carried the day, and Cassie set off for Youlcliffe on her sad errand with a strange mixture of joy and sorrow in her heart.

Meantime Joshua, the shrewd and wary, had happened to hear of Mrs. Broom's illness before his son. He was standing on the high stone steps leading to his door that same evening when a small boy appeared at the foot.

"What do ye want, little un?" said he, looking down superciliously.

"Where's Roland?" replied the small messenger. "Bessie Broom have had a fit, and the doctor's away to Stoneaton they says, and Nathan thowt that mebbe Roland would ride over for un. Eh but there is the doctor come home hissen, so it don't matter now!" said the boy, who had not hurried himself with his message.

Joshua immediately determined to get his son out of harm's way. "For to be sure, Cassie'll be down to see her aunt d'reely," said he to himself.

After his fashion he was proud and fond of his boy. He had given him some education: Roland could read, and write, and cipher—at that time not common accomplishments, of which his father made much use. He had a sort of general notion of his son's making a grand marriage with money, which might help the "trade," which was all done in a gambling sort of way, rich one day, half-ruined the next, and he determined to make a great effort.

He went down to Roland, who was hard at work in the sheds behind the house "suppering up" and "littering down" the cattle, safe, as his father saw, from all chance of hearing the news. He came close up to the heifer which Roland was driving in, pinched it scientifically, and said,—

"Ye'll tak' her betimes to-morrow to Farmer Stodge's, as I promised un when he were this way; and then I was a thinking, Roland, as 'twould be a good job for thee to go on to t'other side York, to Mitchell's, as sould me the last lot o' runts, and see and manage about not paying the money. And there's a horsedealer, Jackman, as worries me sore about

a heap o' things down there. Nobody can't manage it but you, Roland," said his father, who had a persuasive way with him when he chose. "I canna go mysen. I mun pick up summat i' th' way o' nags at the big fair at Hawksley; but if it can be done, you'll do it, and things is out and out bad wi' me this time."

Joshua had always kept his son in the dark as to his affairs; but his uneasiness this time was real.

"There's Martha Savage had a very tidy portion left her," he went on, "when her husband died; 'twould be very convenient now. Couldn't ye tak' to her, Roland? She's a pair o' smartish black eyes, and hur's a rare un to manage a house, and nimble o' foot."

"Ay, and wi' her tongue, too. But ye'd best leave yon alone, father. I'd not wed wi' her an she'd the Bank o' England to her fortune, and were as pretty as Queen Esther in her royal robes."

Joshua was beginning to feel that there was a certain point beyond which even he did not dare to urge his son, "quiet" as he thought him to be, and he hurried him off very early, before Cassandra could reach Youlcliffe, going with him himself the first few miles for better security.

"I'm not particular to a day or two about your coming back, Roland; 'tain't often ye get an out," he said at parting to his unconscious son.

"It's all for his good," he said to himself, as he returned slowly home alone. Whenever we do anything particularly selfish and ill-natured, we always find out that it is all for somebody's advantage. We so far pay homage to the good within us as to tell it a lie. It is not quite so silly as to believe us, but it is a little stupefied.

He was quite successful in his plans. The unsuspecting Roland was leaving Youlcliffe by one road as Cassandra approached it by another.

When she at length reached her aunt there was little consciousness left. The old woman lay in a sort of sleep, painless and quiet; and although she often spoke, the bystanders could not be sure that she recognized them. Pleasant, kindly words they were which she uttered, like herself, but the unseen world seemed to be closing round her. She talked, but it seemed to be chiefly with those who were gone,—her father, mother, and sister, who had been dead for years.

It was a gentle dismissal. As Cassie sat in the dimly-lighted chamber, watching the waning life ebbing slowly away, she involuntarily looked towards the door, and started at every fresh voice downstairs, hoping to see Roland, longing for a word or a sign. It was many months since the meeting under the fern on the steep hill-side, and she began to have the cold shiver of doubt which absence brings with it under such complete separation; but she watched and waited in vain, no Roland appeared. She reproached herself for thinking of anything but the solemn scene before her; but the tide of life was too strong within her,—she was too young to live in the past,—and her heart sank within her as she heard and saw nothing of him.

The old man wandered about in a lost way, which was very pathetic, and refused to be comforted.

"Eh," said he, "she were ailing long afore she spoke; she niver took to her bed, and she said sudden like one day, 'I think I'll send for Cassie an I'm going to be bad.' And I said, 'Eh, lass, but ye mustna talk like that, to want a nuss! There'st ony a bit low; bide a bit. What'll iver I do an thou'st sick?' And she laughed out so merry, and says, 'Eh, men's but poor creeturs wi'out women to look arter 'um!' And I wouldn't b'lieve there was much amiss, and she aye so cheerful like. And last Saturday, afore she were took for death, there come one o' thoe Methodus as owed her a bit o' money for summat o' 'nother, and arter she'd paid her, I heerd her say, 'Well, now I've squared matters wi' ye here, Bessie Broom, and I hope, too, you've a made your accounts right wi' God; for it's like He may ca' ye soon to Himself an ye be so bad.' And such a turn it giv' me as niver were; for yur see she'd niver said nowt, and I couldn't bear to think she were real ill, nor as she were going away from me. And I'm right down mad wi' myself now as I didn't send for you d'recly, and the doctor too before, but she never could abide doctors."

"I'm sure you did a' you could for her, uncle," said Cassie affectionately.

"Nay, lass, but I didna; that's where 'tis. I were a thinkin' o' my own comfort,—I were right down took up wi' mysen,—that's how 'twere; and she, she were allus thinkin' for other folk, and niver giv' in till she were took for death."

"She were a happy wife anyhow were aunt Bessie," said she, "and thought no end o' you, ye know, uncle Nathan."

"Yes, my wench, but that was her goodness, not mine."

At last came the end: a bright light passed over the old woman's face—the light of the rising, not the setting—and then she passed so peacefully away that neither Cassandra nor her uncle could tell the moment when the breath ceased: that strange moment, which changes the man made after the image of his Maker into something less valuable than the clods of the field. Her father had made her promise that she would return immediately after the death, clenching it by saying that German should not go to the funeral unless she came home, so she prepared honourably to keep her word.

"Good-by, Cassie," said her uncle, as he parted with her at the little garden-gate. "She were main fond o' thee, lass, were thy aunt Bessy. Her have a left thee the sixty-eight pund odd. 'German,' says she, 'will hae his father's farm. We mun trust to thee to do rightly by that now.' Ah, and thae flowers," said the old man, going back to his own thoughts, and passing his hand affectionately over a bush as he went along, "how fond she were o' thae roses! She made 'um a' for to stand o' one leg. She said they werena so bothersome about the bottom, they didna hae so many rucks. And there she didna bide wi' us sa long as

the flowers! How hur did knock about to be sure!—summer and winter hur were allus a doing. She hadn't a lazy bone in hur body. She were a very endeeavouring woman she were; and we niver had a word together for nine-and-thirty year!"

As they stood at the wicket they saw Joshua walking slowly away, having apparently just passed the house, with an affectation of not looking round.

"I wunna speak to him," said Nathan. "Bessie couldn't abide him. I wonder Roland hasna iver been to inquire after her, she set great store by him. And he know'd she were ill, for I sent up to him. Joshua gives it out as he's made a very deal o' money; happen he's grow'd too grand for such as we. And there's a farmer nigh to York where he's dealings in the cattle line, and where Roland goes a deal they say. That's where he is now I take it. I wonder whether there's any females in the house there?" said the old man dreamily. "But a should ha' come and seen his auld friend a should, afore he went; a thing prizeable is an old friend, and she were allus one to him."

It was with a weary heart that Cassie went home that day; "unknown females" danced before her imagination. What if his father had schemed Roland into marrying some York beauty? "What shall I care for the money then?" said the poor girl to herself. At first she had been glad of her dower: "but I've lost aunt Bessie as loved me, and now there's Roland going too; what good will money do me?"

As she turned off the high-road out of the broad Dale, she saw a storm of rain come travelling slowly up the valley: each fold of hill was slowly blotted out one after another; before it all seemed fair and glowing, behind it the beautiful details of rock and wood vanished as under the sweep of a brush of dark colour, the outlines were blurred, the beauty effaced as its finger touched them. When she reached Stone Edge, the skirts of the cloud had broken over her: she was wet to the skin; the beauty seemed to have been wiped out of her day, the cloud to be slowly gathering over her life.

Voyage of the "Diana" Whaler of Hull,

IN THE YEARS 1866-67.

THIS short narrative of a voyage to the Eastern Greenland seas, and the northern regions of Davis Straits, is prepared from information given by the survivors and from the journals of the surgeon and the ship's log-book. It illustrates some of the dangers to which our whale-fishers are still exposed, notwithstanding the great improvements in the construction of ships, the introduction of steam, and knowledge and experience acquired by the various Arctic expeditions. Owing to the high value of oil and seal-skins, and the great demand for whalebone, which is now worked up for every conceivable article of use, and has reached a marketable value of nearly 700*l.* per ton, great encouragement has lately been offered to embark in the Northern fisheries, and quite a fleet of fine steam and sailing ships annually leave our shores on these adventurous voyages.

The ships sail about the end of February, having engaged all their principal officers, harpooners, boat-steerers, and seamen at the Northern ports, and proceed to fill up their complement of oarsmen, or rowers, with the hardy fishermen of the Shetland Islands. Without loss of time they sail to the edge of the Polar ice, in the Eastern Greenland seas, and the neighbourhood of Jan Mayen Island; and through storms and bitter frosts they cruise along, keeping a constant look-out from the *crow's-nest* at the mast-head for the young seals, which are born in thousands upon the ice. Incurring the greatest risks from collision with the pack-ice, the violent gales, and the loss of boats and men sent away in the search, they frequently after weeks and weeks of this laborious work return home without success, having missed the seals in the wild wastes around them. If, however, they have the good fortune to fall in with the seals, which are often seen in such quantities as to blacken the ice for miles away, the ship is immediately forced into the pack, and the men are sent away with rifles, clubs, and long knives, to kill them by hundreds, and to drag their skins and blubber to the ship. Should the weather remain fine and the pack so close that the poor seals cannot escape into the water, a ship will often fill up in a few days; but if a gale arise the men hasten on board, and the ship has to make all speed out of the ice, or remain to be crushed to atoms and the crews to perish. The sealing season at an end, the ships then return homeward to recruit their men and to replenish their stores for the voyage to Davis Straits in search of whales.

Formerly the whalers used to be content with trying the seas on the West coast of Greenland, in Davis Straits, as far as latitude 70°, and in

the vicinity of Disco Island, beyond which it was considered impossible to pass. But owing to the expedition which was sent in 1818 for the discovery of the North-west passage having given information of the great numbers of whales seen in the extreme northern limits of Davis Straits, and more particularly on the western side, our whalers have since penetrated year after year these inhospitable regions, and oftentimes with astonishing success.

As the whales always seek the protection (from the attacks of the sword-fish,) of the *fast ice*, or ice which is still attached to the land and bays after the main body has broken away in the summer, and as they are found to be numerous in the neighbourhood of Lancaster Sound and Pond's Bay, the chief object of the whalers is to arrive there about the commencement of July. Succeeding in this, they are almost certain of a full ship, but they must encounter a most dangerous navigation on their way.

Northern Davis Straits and Baffin's Sea are full of a vast loose pack of floe-ice and enormous icebergs, either forced upon the land with incredible violence, or driven off it according to the direction of the gales of wind at the time. To arrive, then, at the north-western limits of Baffin's Sea, it is necessary to follow the indentations of the Greenland shores, pushing forward whenever the pack is driven to sea by the force of the wind; but when the pack drives upon the land, to hold on with every endeavour to the ice still attached to the shore, and even at times with large ice-saws to cut a dock for the ship in it for protection against the violence of the shock. To deviate from this course is considered fatal, for once to become entangled in the mass of drifting ice is to be carried out to sea with it and to be there frozen in. Escape is then almost impossible; the ship becomes more and more surrounded until, perhaps, land and water are alike lost to view; and if she is not soon crushed by the violent agitation of the ice-floes, or driven to pieces against a grounded iceberg, she is carried helplessly throughout the long winter wherever the storms and currents may drive the frozen sea, and until she is hurled into the Atlantic in following spring-time.

Such has been the fate of several of the whale-ships, some having been lost with all on board, never to be heard of again, others to be released in the spring with the greater part of their crews dead or dying. Such also was our fate in the *Fox* discovery ship, when we were for nine weary months thus hopelessly beset without once seeing either land or the open sea, and again only last year as happened to the *Diana* whaler, whose recent return home after having been given up for lost has created so much interest and sympathy for her unfortunate crew.

The *Diana* sailed from Hull on February 19th, and from Lerwick, March 8, 1866, for the Eastern Greenland fisheries. Having arrived at the ice in latitude 69° 45'—the magnificent peak of Jan Mayen island in sight—the search for seals was immediately commenced; but after battering about in the ice-edge, and in the pack, during four weeks, amid a succession of violent gales, she sailed on April 19, on her return homeward, having only succeeded in obtaining about twenty seals. It must have been with a heavy heart that Captain Gravill bore up from his more fortunate

companions ; for only the previous day he had spoken the ships *Milmka* with 3,000, the *Alexandra* with 3,000, and *Jan Mayen* with 1,500 seals. The season was at an end ; no time was to be lost in pushing on to Davis Straits, and he could only hope that better fortune might attend him in the perilous voyage he had in prospect. The *Diana* arrived in Lerwick on April 28th, and the surgeon, Dr. Smith, thus describes his rambles on shore in Shetland :—"The country has a bleak and barren aspect, from the hills and undulations being covered with heather, varied only by the numbers of little stacks of peat. We met droves of small shaggy ponies, active long-woolled sheep, and stunted hide-bound cattle, with listless men and boys, followed by collie-dogs, attending to the stock, groups of women, girls, and aged men carrying turf along the winding roads in baskets upon their backs, all the women knitting as they walked. We entered the dwellings of some of the country-people : they were chiefly built of stone, with a thatched roof, and consisted of one room, with bed-cabins ranged around the sides, a fire of peat burning upon the floor, the smoke finding its way out through a small hole in the roof, and the reek of the peat most painful to the eyes, and rendering it difficult to find the proffered seat. We were offered milk at a penny a bowlful, and it was remarkable with what kindness and unaffected hospitality we were welcomed to these gloomy abodes.' They seemed so glad to meet with sailors, for almost all the husbands, fathers, sons, and sweethearts in the island are engaged in the fisheries. One old woman in particular was delighted to see me. She told me that her husband and all her sons were at sea, and that she had lost one son in a ship that was never heard of again. She remarked that 'God had sent me to cheer her up a bit.' Other women dropped in at the same time, one of them a spawwife, or wizard, and these good creatures told many stories of the hardships and privations of a Shetlander's life, as they smoked their pipes filled with the *Diana's* tobacco. A ramble along the cliffs was most enjoyable. We sat down upon the turf and smoked, and drank fresh water from the springs, and we watched the hooded-crow picking up shell-fish from the beach, dropping it from a height upon the rocks, and descending again to pick the fish from the broken shell. Inland were women and old men busy manuring the ground with seaweed, and planting potatoes, which are dibbled in and covered by a light harrow, invariably drawn by women. I never saw a horse or pony at work upon the land."

By the 8th of May the *Diana* was all ready for sea, and sailed on her voyage to Davis Straits, and running across the Atlantic with favourable winds, she passed Cape Farewell, the extreme southern point of Greenland, on the 17th, and arrived off Disco on the 26th. Every preparation was now made for the capture of fish, the boats' gear was all rove and the lines coiled in them, the harpoons and lances sharpened, harpoon-guns cleaned, and the different crews told off to their boats. Several of the whaling-fleet were already in sight, ranging about in search of whales, and waiting for the rupture of ice to allow them to proceed northward.

On the 28th the first whale was seen, and the ship immediately

entirely shut off by enormous glaciers from the rest of mankind; they live by hunting the bear, the walrus, and seal, which they kill upon the ice with spears and knives;—having no guns or boats; they are so entirely isolated that, until the arrival of the expedition of 1818, they considered themselves the only people in the world. They are a fine manly race of about 150 people, clothed in the skins of the bear, the wolf, and the seal, and were the means of affording the greatest relief and assistance to Drs. Kane and Hayes, who wintered among them.

By the 25th of June the *Diana* reached the entrance to Lancaster Sound, and all hands were delighted at the prospect of a good and successful voyage. They were now on the west side, and in the best whaling waters. The decks were cleared of all lumber, the casks were all re-stowed in the hold, the lances and boat-axes carefully ground, large tackles rove for getting up the fish's head and tail, and, in fact, everything ready for *taking, fenching, and making off* at any moment. Early the following morning a whale rose near the ship, and the boats were instantly lowered in pursuit; but they were recalled by the captain on his coming upon deck, as it was contrary to his express wishes that any boats should be sent away on Sunday—a day always strictly observed by Captain Gravill as a day of rest, whenever the dangerous nature of their voyage would admit of it, and never allowed to pass without the crew being twice mustered for prayer and religious service.

29th June.—Two Esquimaux, man and wife, from Pond's Bay came on board; the woman dressed in deer-skin jacket with a tail before and behind, and tattooed upon the chin and cheeks in token of her being married. They came in the hope of obtaining a little gunpowder and bartering a few blades of whalebone.

30th.—The following entry appears in the surgeon's journal:—"A glorious day. At 2 A.M. a whale seen; three boats away in pursuit. At 4 A.M. the ship resounded with the cry, 'A fall! a fall!' and all hands rushed upon deck in a half-dressed state and crowded into the boats, which were instantly lowered and put off in the greatest haste. Bill Reynolds was fast to a fish at the floe-edge about 200 yards astern of the ship. I ran along the floe and stood at the boat's stern, the line running out like lightning, the fish having dived under the floe: the boat's Jack hoisted at the stern, the ship's Jack triumphantly flying from the mizen-mast head. Six other boats at different points along the floe-edge, with their crews lying on their oars in breathless excitement, awaiting the rising of the whale to strike her again. She rose on the ship's starboard quarter, was fired at again with a gun-harpoon, and by six o'clock, after a deadly struggle with harpoons and lances, she was dead alongside. At nine o'clock another fish was seen. Suddenly the captain sung out, 'A fall! a fall!' Again the same scene of excitement and confusion. Byers, the harpooner, was fast to a fish, but something evidently wrong; his boat was dragged nearly under water. The crew leaped upon the ice, the line flew up, the Jack was lowered, the whale was free, for the line had

got entangled, and had it not broken the boat with all her crew would have been dragged to destruction. All the boats now returned to the ship but two, and we resumed the operation of flensing the first fish killed, when again the cry was raised, 'A fall! a fall!' The last fish had risen again and Clark had already buried his harpoon over the socket in her side. By 11.30 A.M. she was dead, and by 6 P.M., the operation of flensing was completed.

"All hands turned in early, very greasy, wet, and weary; the weather thick and foggy with sleet and snow; our decks and everything about the ship slippery with oil and grease, and thousands of sea-birds surrounding the ship, feeding, fighting, and chattering over the scraps of blubber and oil. We consider that we have got twenty tons of oil from these two fish. The bone of the first measures 10 ft. 3 in., and of the second 9 ft. 3 in. The value may be reckoned thus: twenty tons of oil at 50*l.* per ton, 1,000*l.*; one and a half tons of bone, at 700*l.* per ton, 1,050*l.* Total value of this day's fishing, 2,050*l.*

"The Esquimaux, who had remained on board and thoroughly entered into the sport, left next morning and returned in the afternoon with a sledge and six dogs and a tent in order to receive a load of 'muck-tuck,' or whale's skin, which to them is a great delicacy."

Well would it have been for the *Diana's* crew had they followed the example of these poor Esquimaux in preserving some of this food for themselves, for the skin of the whale is most nutritious and has well-known anti-scorbutic properties. But the crew of the *Diana* were flushed with their present good-fortune and did not care to contemplate how greatly they might yet stand in need. They had arrived in good time at their fishing-ground, two whales had already been captured without those dangers with which the killing of these huge fish are often attended; they felt that they had only to work earnestly at the fishing for a few short weeks and then to return home to their families with the fruits of their hard-earned labours. But a sad change came over their fortunes. The sea in which they now were cruising, usually open at this season, already began to be blocked with ice driven over to the western shores by a continuance of easterly winds; and although many whales were seen from time to time, and the boats frequently sent away, they were so hampered with the ice-floes that it was almost all they could do to keep the ship from danger.

Several of the other whaling ships were met with, some having from two to five fish, others without any, and all agreeing that it was an unusual and unlucky season. On the 27th July they spoke the *Retriever*, her captain reporting that he had killed three and lost two fish; he had seen many whales, and could easily have filled his ship a few days since, had not the ice set in and jammed the boats. The *Wildfire* reported that at one time as many as forty whales were blowing around her when the ice suddenly set in and drove the ship away. The *Alexandra* had been nipped, and was bent almost like the letter S, and had narrowly escaped destruction. Some men having been seen travelling upon the ice towards the ships,

and thought to be a wrecked crew, attempts were made to reach them, but for several days without avail, until at last they got to the *Tay*, and reported that they had left their ship, the *Queen*, of Peterhead, which had passed the whole winter in the Lancaster Sound, and were seeking refuge until their ship, which was still frozen in a floe of ten miles in extent, was released.

The summer was fast passing away, a few narwhales and seals being the only additions to the *Diana's* gains. The weather had become stormy and unsettled, and it was time to think of proceeding south and passing down the south-western shores on their return. By August 11, they had got as far as Coutts' Inlet, where, however, they met a succession of easterly winds, which had so driven the pack on the land that there was little prospect of getting farther in that direction. It was now decided to attempt to return home by passing round the north of the middle ice and down the east water, and by the 17th they were again in sight of Cape York, but they could not pass to the eastward; the ice was closed upon the land, and their only chance of escape seemed to try again the western shore. By September 3rd they had struggled as far as Scott's Inlet, but could get no farther, the entry in the log being "ship tight, nipped up." The situation was now getting desperate; the last of the fleet, the *Intrepid*, had parted with them the day previously, having been enabled by her greater steam-power to force through a nip, and had steamed away in a lane of water.

They were now alone, their coals all burnt, and the carpenter already sawing up the spare spars for fuel, and but two months' provisions remaining, with the certainty of their being carried off into the pack and drifting in it all through the winter, or of their ship being crushed and their all perishing in the wastes of ice and snow. In this awful position the captain called upon his officers for their advice, and then summoned all hands, and giving them a few words of encouragement, he told them that they must at once go upon short allowance; that he calculated that the two months' remaining provisions might be eked out until the following May; and that any of the men who had saved bread were to bring it aft for the general stock; that all the provisions were to be placed in charge of the chief harpooner, who was to weigh out carefully to each man three pounds of bread and three-quarters of a pound of salt beef daily for the present; this to be afterwards reduced, if necessary, and the officers to share alike with the men. It is needless to say that the crew all saw how necessary were these orders, and they agreed to them without a murmur.

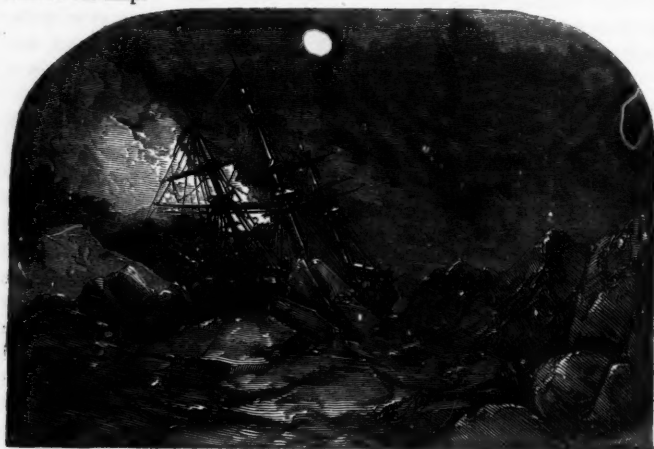
The second mate having seen from aloft a dead whale upon the floe, with a number of bears feeding upon it, a party of nineteen men, with rifles and flensing-knives, were sent with a boat, in hopes of bringing back a load of the carcase and skin, for such an opportunity of getting food was not to be lost; but the distances in the ice are so deceptive that the whale was found to be miles farther off than it appeared, and they had soon to leave the heavy boat behind them. They did not reach the

whale, and as the ice began to open, the ship loosed her foretop-gallant sail—the signal of instant recall—and they attempted to make their way back; but, finding themselves cut off by a lane of water, they got upon a small piece of floating ice for a raft to bring them across to where they had left their boats. In the middle of the passage their ice-raft began to sink under their weight. "Swim for your lives!" cried the mate, as he leaped into the freezing water, followed by seven others; thus releasing the raft of their weight, and enabling the rest, who could not swim, to keep the raft afloat. By this act of bravery all were saved; and, half-frozen and worn out with fatigue, they eventually reached their ships, without having attained the object of their journey.

Driven again out of their position—off Scott's Inlet—by a gale of wind, another attempt was made to return northward into the east water, by rounding the north of the middle ice; and on the 15th Cape York was once more in sight, but the ice was impassable. They now thought of wintering in Pond's Bay, but this was given up, as their provisions could not possibly be eked out beyond the early spring, and so, baffled on all sides, there was nothing left for them but to force the ship again down the western shore. With the greatest exertions they reached as far as the river Clyde on the 22nd. The new ice was forming so fast that all navigation was at an end, and the ship now appears to have been quite beset, and had already commenced her weary drift to the southward, with the main body of the ice. Hope almost seems to have left them, yet those brave fellows never for once relaxed their efforts; for the log-book contains daily entries of the desperate attempts made to move the ship, by setting the sails, warping with the frozen lines, and blasting the ice with gunpowder. The fatigues that this work must have entailed upon the men, half-starved and exposed to all the furies of the autumnal gales, with no hope or encouragement to persevere, and every effort in vain, must have been very great, and perhaps laid the first seeds of that dreaded disease which afterwards proved so fatal. In this helpless state the *Diana* drifted all the month of October. She was off Cape Broughton on the 17th, and off Cape Searle on the 18th—the simple entries in the log bearing evidence of bitter disappointments. Thus, October 2nd—"Saw a fish, but could not get to her." Fancy these starving men seeing a huge fish close at hand, but unable to capture it. Its crang or flesh would have been sufficient food for them all, and the oil and bone would have added 1,000*l.* to their voyage. Again, on the 15th there is the entry, "A body of water in sight to the south-eastward, but cannot get into it."

On the 22nd they were drifting off Exeter Sound, where an Englishman is wintering, and endeavouring to form a fishing colony of Esquimaux. The ship was fifteen miles from the land, and a burning signal of pitch and oakum was lighted at the yard-arm, in hopes of their being seen from the shore, and that some of the Esquimaux might come off to their relief. A storm was raging at the time, and even had a response been made from the land, pointing out the position of the settlement, it would have been

impossible to have crossed the rugged ice. There now came a fresh danger. They were fast approaching the barren land, where nothing lives, and from whence escape is impossible. To their horror they found the ship driving directly upon the rocks of Cape Victoria, over which the ice was piling on to the shore; and to have struck the ground would have been instant destruction, for the ice would have at once run over and buried the ship.



The surgeon thus writes in his diary on November 8th:—"About four o'clock a massive fragment of ice was forcing itself against the ship's quarter. The watch on deck were hastily getting up the scanty provisions from the hold, others getting up sails from the line-room for tents; all this going on by lamplight, and in the greatest hurry and confusion. Then the ominous cry, 'All hands ahoy!' rang down the hatchway, and the whole crew instantly swarmed upon deck. The night was pitchy dark, the ship groaning and straining with the tremendous pressure, the officers shouting their orders, the dull rumbling of the provision-casks along the deck, the flaring, flickering light borne hastily to and fro, the shrieking of the storm, with the certain conviction that we were about to be crushed, all presented a scene which I shall never forget."

The boats' provisions being all ready, the men proceeded to pack their bags, and then the crew were called aft to prayers in the cabin, the captain urging upon them the necessity of imploring the aid of God in their desperate position. The general impression was that they would have to drag the boats and provisions in search of the natives in Cumberland Sound, and where it was thought some ships might be wintering; but as the men were already in a very weak state, and without sledges or travelling equipment of any kind, this was looked upon as a last and desperate resource.

This state of things continued hour after hour until the evening of the 10th, when the ship was only half a mile off the tremendous cliffs of Cape Victoria. Then a sudden change of wind set in, and they were hurled round the rocks into the open of Frobisher Straits, "the beautiful aurora flickering in the heavens like another bow of promise."

During the remainder of November and the month of December the *Diana* was drifting in the entrance of Cumberland Sound and Frobisher Straits. On the 23rd November, the nip was so severe that all hands were called on deck to prepare for the worst. The ship was actually laid on her beam-ends, and the cry of "She's stove! she's stove!" rang along the decks. The pumps were ordered to be manned, but they were found to be so completely frozen as to be useless, and had to be disconnected and thawed out over a fire before they could be worked.

The ship now began to leak so fearfully that the crew tore away some of the inside planking, to try to stop the leak forward, but without success, and the pumps were kept going night and day, having constantly to be lifted and burnt out. The hardships were telling sadly on the crew, and the poor captain, completely worn out with anxiety and depression, was fast sinking. He had gone into a tent, which was rigged upon the ice near the ship, in case of their having suddenly to leave her, and he there tried to get some rest from the constant groaning and creaking of the ship; but almost perished with the cold, he had returned on board in a worse state than before.

Christmas day passed gloomily enough: at 8 A.M. the ship narrowly escaped destruction upon an iceberg, which was aground, and against which she was so nearly driven that the crew all prepared to seek escape upon the floe. At 9 A.M. another struggle with the same berg, the current driving them well upon it. At 11, a prayer-meeting was held upon the half-deck, and a hymn was sung; then dinner was served out, consisting of a slice of pudding, and a piece of cold salted beef, and some tripe which had been saved by the mate for the occasion. The crew sat down upon their chests in groups of two and three, and tried to forget their troubles in their first good meal since their being beset. In the cabin the officers had formed a table, and ate their dinner almost in silence, for the poor captain was in a dying state upon a sofa, and in a half-unconscious slumber, from which they feared to awake him. Even now they were not at rest, for at 3 P.M. the ice was again in motion, and the pressure upon the ship became so great that she was half lifted on her side, and even the cabin deck was bending under their feet. Thus they spent the day. No Christmas song or evening mirth was attempted, and all felt relieved when the night-watch was set, and they could retire to their berths and try to escape their gloomy thoughts in sleep.

On the following day the captain died, notwithstanding the unremitting attentions of those about him. They had sat up with him night after night as he lay with all his clothes on, ready at any moment to be carried out of the ship, and always anxiously inquiring

how things were going on on deck. Well might his late companions feel his loss, for never was a man more respected by his crew. Many of them had been with him from their boyhood, for year after year, in these hazardous voyages, and all looked up to him as a father and a friend. They placed his body upon the bridge, in a coffin made by the carpenter.

The New Year commenced without change in their prospects. The ship gradually drove southward through the month of January, and on the 16th was off Cape Labrador. Only one cask of beef now remaining, the allowance was again reduced. The spare wood, cask-staves, and some of the boats were burnt for fuel, and an oil-lamp was kept burning to melt snow for water. Small stores were all gone, and still there were no hopes of an early release. The entries in the log-book recount the constant struggles of the crew with the ice, and their attempts to keep the ship afloat. On one or two occasions, a lean and hungry bear would come to look at the ship; but the whalers have an unfortunate prejudice against eating the flesh, which they consider poisonous, although it is really wholesome and nutritious food. They do not appear to have killed or attempted to hunt the bears. A few snowy owls and ravens also visited the ship; but beyond this they do not seem to have met with any opportunity of getting any fresh food whatever.

To pass the time, they told stories of their former adventures in the fisheries, illustrating the extraordinary dangers they frequently undergo; and one of the harpooners related the following to the surgeon:—

"I went to sea for the first time in 1854, as half-deck boy on board the *Violet*, of Hull, on a sealing voyage to East Greenland. It was perhaps the severest weather ever known in the country. One day we noticed something black upon the ice, and thinking it was the seals, a boat was sent away and found five poor fellows laid side by side, all frozen to death, and another kneeling by himself close by, with a boat-hook as a signal. We took them on board and buried them next day. The survivor told us that they belonged to a Danish ship, and had been away sealing, when a gale coming on, their boat was stove and the ship driven out of sight. He lived six weeks, but had to have both his legs taken off, and died afterwards. A good many ships were lost that year, and three Hull ships, the *Germania*, the *Hebe*, and the *Violet*, which I was aboard of. We drove into the pack in a gale of wind, and was stove in. We were eight days upon the wreck, the empty casks holding her up, but were taken off by a Dutch vessel and were kindly taken care of. It was fearfully cold that year; some of the crews were wrecked three times, and you'd see ships with their ensigns flying for doctors to come off to the wrecked crews, many of whom were badly frost-bitten." Such were the tales these poor fellows told each other as they sat over the flaring oil-lamps on board the *Diana*.

During the whole month of February the ship made but little progress, being jammed in the open of Frobisher Straits. The crew now began to get worse and worse from the effects of the short allowance of food, and on the 15th, Forbes, a Shetlander, died. The day previously he was

working at the pumps (which he had resolutely refused to quit, determining to do his duty to the last), when he suddenly fell down, exclaiming, "I can do no more." He was immediately carried below to his berth, but said to the surgeon, "It is too cold there, doctor; it is full of ice, and I cannot sleep there." He was then put into another bed with one of his countrymen, but he never rallied again. Poor fellow, he had been allowed three extra biscuits in the last week, but was quite unable to eat them. On March 4th, Abernethy (Shetlander) died, and the two bodies were laid upon the bridge beside the captain. Towards the middle of March they had drifted down to the entrance of Hudson's Strait, and the ice becoming more slack, they were enabled at times to force the ship, with all sail and warps, short distances to the south-eastward, and on the 17th a heavy swell setting into the pack indicated their approach to the open ocean. The excitement was now intense. Every effort was made night and day; and at last, on the 18th, they broke out, after a gale of wind which severely damaged the rudder.

The broad Atlantic was now before them. They were released, and bore away with a loud cheer for home; but they were so reduced in strength as to be almost incapable of working the ship. The dreadful scurvy increased in violence on the sudden change from the frosts of the ice-pack to the damps and fogs of the open water. The 'tween-deck was in a fearful state from the sleeping berths, which had been almost constantly coated with ice, now becoming thawed and dripping wet. They had stripped the ship of almost everything inflammable, and so were unable to make any fire below, and many of the crew lay in their berths unable to help themselves or each other, and as all who were capable of duty were constantly called to the work upon deck, and that finished, they were so fatigued as to be just able to crawl to their beds, the unfortunate sick men were almost dependent upon the ship's cook, who sat up night and day trying to afford them some relief by feeding them with soaked biscuit and a thin soup made from his scraps which he had saved for the purpose. Some of those who had struggled upon deck in the first excitement of their release, soon fell down at the pumps, and as each day another death occurred the bodies were brought up from below, wrapped in canvas, and laid in rows upon deck. Some of the deaths of these scurvy-stricken men were so sudden—the effects of the slightest exertion followed by a fatal syncope—as scarcely to give time for the surgeon to be called to the bedside. On one occasion the surgeon was assisting upon deck, when a sailor said to him, "Doctor, you're wanted below," and he arrived between decks only in time to find a poor fellow who, in struggling out of his berth, had been thrown down from the rolling of the ship, and was lying dead upon the decks. On another occasion, the slight exertion of crawling out of bed was instantly fatal—poor Arthur Yell being found dead upon his two companions, over whom he had tried to pass, and who were too weak to remove his body from off them. Most providentially, strong fair winds drove them across the Atlantic, and they

managed to get the sails set upon the ship, but were utterly unable to reduce it to the gales. In this state they flew before the wind in their race with death, until at last three only of the whole company were able to go aloft. The surgeon appears to have done everything in his power; for besides attending the sick and performing the sad offices for the dead, he took his turn at the pumps, kept the watch, and assisted with the sails and ropes. Messrs. Clark, Loffey, Byers, Smith, and Reynolds, mates and harpooners, worked with desperate energy, as indeed all did while capable of the least exertion. They fortunately made the land on March 31, and it was determined to run the ship into the nearest harbour, Ronas Voe, early on the 2nd April, 1867. So completely were they exhausted that had they been out for another day they must have been lost; for the night previous to sighting the land three men fell at the pumps, and one of the principal sails blew away from their inability to secure it. On entering Ronas Voe nine corpses were lying on the deck, two men only could go aloft, and two other poor fellows died in their berths; but with the aid of help from the shore the ship was brought safely to anchor, and a messenger despatched to Lerwick for assistance.

The kind people of the neighbourhood immediately sent off refreshments, and every attention was given to the poor worn-out sailors, who speak with the greatest gratitude of all the kindness, and who, now that their anxieties were at an end, soon began to improve in health. Help, however, came too late to save three other poor fellows, who died on the following day.

The sad funerals having taken place, and the *Diana* again prepared for sea, she subsequently sailed for Hull with a fresh crew sent to bring her round. Arriving in the Humber the news spread rapidly over the town that the "long-lost whaler" was in sight. How sadly different her present from many a former arrival, when she had returned triumphantly, with her crew rejoicing in success and health, and bringing a good account of their voyage to their employers and families. Crowds now flocked down to stare at her bleached rigging and her worn and whitened sides, and to lend their hearty sympathy; but no ringing cheer welcomed her coming, and no garland wove by fair hands fluttered from her maintop-gallant-stay, and her ensign half lowered from her peak was the sad signal of her sacred charge—the coffin of her good captain, who was now borne back upon the deck of his ship to his last home upon earth.

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